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THIS BOOK

BELONGS TO

J. HARRY DEEMS,

BALTIMORE, MD.

If it is borrowed by a friend,
Right welcome shall one be
To read, to study, *not to lend*,
But to return to me.

Not that imparted knowledge doth
Diminish learning's store,
But books, I find, if lent again
Return to me no more.

Read slowly, pause frequently, think seriously, keep cleanly, return duly,

With the Corners of the Leaves not turned down.

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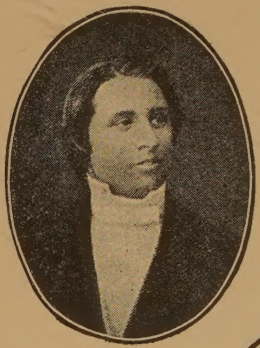

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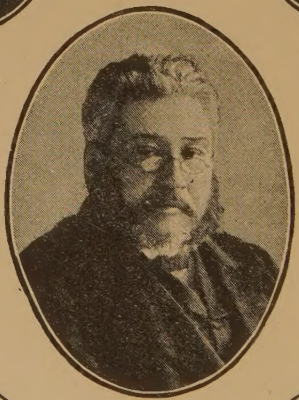

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From the Usher's Desk

to

The Tabernacle Pulpit

THE LIFE AND LABORS

OF

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

By REV. ROBERT SHINDLER

AUTHOR OF "NORTHERAM HALL," ETC.

THIRD THOUSAND

New York

A. C. ARMSTRONG AND SON

51 EAST 10th STREET, NEAR BROADWAY

1892

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THE Proof-Sheets of this "Life" were revised at Mentone, under Mr. Spurgeon's supervision, during his last illness; and a final chapter has been added, to carry the history down to the date of his death.

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PREFACE.

"THIS people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise," is Jehovah's declaration concerning His people Israel. It has been wonderfully fulfilled in the history of that people from their beginning. The world owes much to God's ancient people, the Jews; more, indeed, than to any nation, people, or race. But if the words have been fulfilled in the history of Israel as a people, they have been even more eminently true of the fathers and leaders of that people. Among the former, we must rank Abraham, Joseph, and Moses; and among the latter, Joshua, Samuel, and David. All these men were exceptional in their personality, character, and work. No two of them were in all things alike, and no one of them could have done the work of any one of the rest. The like is true in relation to the Christian Church. In even a more real and exalted sense, the Church of Christ is God's workmanship, God's building; and the Divine handiwork may be seen, more or less conspicuously, in all its human

founders and leaders. In proof of this, we need only mention the names of the apostle Paul, of the great Augustine of Hippo, of Wycliffe, of Luther, of Calvin, and in later times, of Whitefield and Wesley, and in our own day, of the apostolic CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON. And as we may truly say of the above-named worthies who have gone to their rest and reward, that they were, in a very high and eminent sense, God-made men, so may we truly affirm of the last-mentioned, whose name is now a household word throughout the whole world.

The writer's personal knowledge of Mr. Spurgeon dates back to the year 1855, the year after his settlement in London. Since that time the often-mistaken public have proclaimed we cannot tell how many Spurgeons. There have been many *second* Spurgeons, besides Scotch Spurgeons, Welsh Spurgeons, and American Spurgeons. And yet, after all, there is but one SPURGEON; though we shall have to make honorable reference to at least four or five generations of Spurgeons.

The student of history, and even the ordinary reader, does not need to be told that all the great leaders of the Church have been men unique in their personal and other characteristics, — men who were divinely fitted for their work, and divinely aided and sustained in its performance, doing that which no other men could have done, or done so well. What other man could have done the work of the apostle Paul, or of Augustine, or Luther, or Calvin? And what man is there who could have done the work Mr.

Spurgeon has done? It is on every side abundantly evident that he is God's man; that God has made him what he is, and done all for His own glory, and for the good of the Church and the world.

If we look at David in his early life, we see him the fair and ruddy son of a Bethlehem farmer, occupied with the care of his father's sheep. But God took him from the sheep-folds, and made him one of the greatest of kings; a prince among poets, prophets, and seers; one of the mighty men of valor, and yet more, one of the strongest of believers, and one of the greatest of saints. The early days of Mr. Spurgeon gave indications of more than average capacity and energy, penetration and mental power, but there were no certain foreshadowings of his future greatness. And, even when he had become popular, there was no one who could have predicted the wide and varied usefulness or the multifarious labors to which he has attained.

In the hall at "Westwood" there hangs a picture of considerable size, containing the portraits of one hundred and ninety-two men of mark, almost exclusively divines of the Protestant Church, in the centre of which is a larger portrait, that of Mr. Spurgeon when about twenty-four or twenty-five, and when hardly the promise of a beard adorned his face. The portraits were pieced together in a very neat and ingenious manner by the Rev. Joseph Mountford, then of Sevenoaks, and afterwards of Leighton Buzzard, where he died in 1867, the funeral being conducted and the funeral sermon preached by

the present writer, one of his closest and firmest friends. Mr. Mountford presented the picture to Mr. Spurgeon, and it was photographed and sold for the benefit of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Fund, when the building was in course of erection. In the picture Mr. Spurgeon stands in the attitude in which he was commonly represented at that time, the right arm raised, and the fore-finger of the right hand pointing upwards. (See portrait on page 87 of the present volume.) It might have seemed to some too great an honor conferred on the young pastor to place him so conspicuously among the learned doctors and great divines of the Puritan and later times; but his subsequent career has fully justified the honor then conferred upon him. He has eclipsed in popularity and usefulness the greatest of them all, though no one could have dreamed at that time to what vast dimensions his influence, his fame, and his varied and marvellous usefulness would extend. But all are accounted for by the divine declaration, specially applicable to God's ministerial servants, that they are formed for Himself, and that they shall show forth His praise.

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LIFE AND LABORS

OF

PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

CHAPTER I.

MR. SPURGEON'S ANCESTRY.

NO life of Mr. Spurgeon would be complete if it did not contain some account of his godly ancestors. There was much in the piety and conscientiousness of those who came before him which will help to account for his sturdy Christian character and unparalleled success. As the name Spurgeon imports, it is Continental rather than Anglican. It can be traced back for about three hundred years.

When Ferdinand Alvarez, Duke of Alva, died, in 1589, his wicked boast, that he had sent to the executioners no less than eighteen thousand persons, was not forgotten. That number represented the actual martyrs to the faith; but, besides these, there

were very many thousands who had been driven into exile, large numbers of whom found a home in England. Among these were the progenitors of the English Spurgeons, who found a shelter and resting-place in East Anglia, some settling in Essex, and others in Norfolk. These Dutch Christians brought their useful arts with them, and, like the Huguenots from France, at a later date, greatly aided in laying the foundations of those various industries which have ministered to the strength and wealth and prosperity of England. The ancestors of Mr. Spurgeon were distinguished alike for their quiet energy, their business capabilities, and, best of all, their true godliness and exemplary piety. They made themselves friends among their English neighbours, and left their mark upon society. Everywhere they were industrious, honorable, and pious people. It is not difficult to see, even in Mr. Spurgeon's physique, a resemblance to the godly Dutchman, while in other respects he has proved himself a worthy son of the noble sires who, driven from their homes by cruel persecutions, carried with them the faith that was dearer to them than life itself.

One of the Essex branch of the family, Job Spurgeon, was a prisoner in Chelmsford jail at the time John Bunyan was lying in Bedford jail, and for the same cause, — faithful adherence to his conscientious convictions. For fifteen weeks, in bitterly severe weather, he lay on a pallet of straw without

any fire. His descendant has an easier lot outwardly, but he is not lacking in the same spirit of Christian heroism, and he also has had his share of suffering for the truth's sake, both in the fierce ordeal through which he had to pass in the early years of his ministry in London, and in his continued contention for "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

It is related that, quite early in his career in London, Mr. C. H. Spurgeon was introduced, in a bookseller's shop in Paternoster Row, to a Mr. John Spurgeon, a descendant of the Norfolk branch of the family. On comparing notes of their respective ancestors, the same piety, uprightness, and loyalty to the truth were found to have characterized them on both sides.

The great-grandfather of Mr. Spurgeon was a man of true Puritan type, and his wife was akin to him in mind, principles, and life. She took a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of their children, and both parents ordered their house faithfully according to the Word and will of God. They were contemporary with the earlier years of the reign of George III. From them we trace an unbroken line of faithful ministers of the Word, including four generations.

CHAPTER II.

C. H. SPURGEON'S GRANDFATHER.

JAMES SPURGEON was a son of the godly couple mentioned on the previous page, and was born at Halstead, Essex, 29th September, 1776. As a boy he was seriously inclined, and while still a youth he joined the Independent Church at Halstead. He was apprenticed at Coggeshall, in the same county, and there enjoyed the privilege of the pastoral oversight of the Rev. S. Fielding. Up to the age of twenty-six he followed business pursuits, when his mind was directed to the work of the gospel ministry. He entered Hoxton Academy in 1802. After a course of two years' study, he responded to an invitation to endeavor to raise the decayed Independent cause at Clare, Suffolk. His success warranted his ordination to the pastorate, and the church continued to prosper under his care. Stambourne, Essex, was his next and final sphere.

The Independent Church in this village had been distinguished for unbroken peace and unity, so that for nearly one hundred and fifty years there had been

but three pastors. The death of the venerable Mr. Beddow in 1810, left a vacancy, which James Spurgeon was requested to fill. He accepted the unani-

REV. JAMES SPURGEON.

mous call of the church, and lived and labored at Stambourne for fifty-four years, enjoying unbroken harmony and more or less of prosperity. When more

than fourscore years of age he often remarked, "I have not had one hour's unhappiness with my church since I have been over it." Invitations from other churches were addressed to him, but the love and unity that prevailed at Stambourne decided him to decline them all. When some of his friends advised him to retire from the pastorate at eighty years of age, he replied, "No! God has blessed me; and *I see that 'at evening time it shall be light,'*" — alluding to a sermon from that text by his grandson which was a great favorite with him. Soon after this there was a blessed revival of the work of God in the village and neighborhood, and several young people joined the church at Stambourne. Frequent prayer-meetings were held, and much good was done, so that the good old pastor was led to say: "I will never give up so long as God inclines people to come, and souls are saved."

Some interesting anecdotes of his grandfather have been recorded by Mr. Spurgeon in "The Sword and the Trowel," and others may be found in his printed sermons. Here is one, entitled —

UNDER THE OAK TREE.

While a youth, under conviction of sin, he frequently repaired to a wood in Honeywood Park, where, especially under a certain oak, then only a sapling, he wept and groaned before the Lord, and where, also, he received the gift of faith to believe

on the Lord Jesus, and enter upon the enjoyment of peace with God. It was a lonely spot, but it was to him a Bethel, the house of God and the gate of heaven. He often resorted thither for meditation, prayer, and praise.

"Some time after this happy event," writes the grandson, "having to go from Coggeshall to Halstead, his route lay near the hallowed spot. On the night previous he dreamed very vividly that Satan appeared to him, and threatened to tear him in pieces if he dared to go along that footpath, and pray under the oak as he had been wont to do. The Evil One reminded him that there was another way through the farmyard, and that if he took the farmyard path all would go well with him. When my grandfather awoke, the impression on his mind was overpowering, and he reasoned thus with himself: 'Whether it be a dream or really a temptation from Satan I cannot tell, but anyhow I will not yield to it, but will show the Devil that I will not do his bidding in anything, but will defy him to his face.' This was the good man all over. Like Luther, he had a vivid impression of the reality and personality of the great Enemy, and was accustomed to make short work with his suggestions.

"One day, when in the pulpit, it came into his head that the place where the sand was kept for sanding the brick floor of his manse ought to be boarded in. His next thought was, what business had Satan to

make me think about the sand-closet on a Sunday, and in the pulpit, too? It shall not be boarded at all. I will let him see that he shall not have his way with me.

"But to return to the story of the oak-tree. My grandfather, then a young man, went on cheerily enough till he came to the stile where the two paths diverged; then a horrible fear came upon him, and he felt his heart beat fast. Suppose he really should meet the Arch-fiend, and should find him too strong for him, what then? Better take the farmyard path. No, that would be yielding to Satan, and he would not do that for ten thousand worlds. He plucked up courage, and tremblingly went on. The stile was leaped, the narrow track through the wood was trod den with resolution mingled with forebodings. The oak was in sight, the sweat was on his face, the pace was quickened, a dash was made, and the tree was grasped, and there was no Satan there. Taking breath a moment, the young man uttered aloud the exclamation, 'Ah, cowardly Devil! you threatened to tear me in pieces, and now you do not dare to show your face.' Then followed a fervent prayer and a song of praise, and the young man was about to go on his way, when his eye was caught by something shining on the ground. It was a ring, a very large ring, he told me, nearly as large as a curtain ring, and it was solid gold. How it came there it would be hard to guess. Inquiries were made, but no claim-

ant ever appeared, and my grandfather had it made into my grandmother's wedding-ring, in memory of the spot so dear to him.

"Year by year he continued to visit the oak-tree on the anniversary of the day of his conversion, to pour out his soul before the Lord. The sapling had spread abroad its branches, and the man had become the parent of a numerous family, but the song of gratitude was not forgotten, nor the prayer that he and his offspring might forever be the Lord's. The angels of God, we doubt not, watched those consecrated seasons with delightful interest.

"To add to the solemnity of the secluded wood, his father, while passing by the spot, was touched by the hand of God, and suddenly fell dead. He could then feel even more deeply, 'How awful is this place!' This made the annual visitations to the tree more deeply impressive, and we believe beneficial. They would have been continued till my grandfather's last year, were it not that the hand of modern improvement ruthlessly swept away tree and wood, and every relic of the past. His last prayer on the dear spot was most ludicrously interrupted. As the wood was almost all felled, he judged by the pathway as nearly as possible where the long-remembered oak had stood; the place was covered with growing wheat, but he kneeled down in it, and began to bless the name of the Lord, when suddenly he heard a rough voice from over the hedge

crying out, 'Maister, there be a creazy man a saying his prayers down in the wheat over thay're.' This startled the suppliant, and made him beat a hasty retreat. Jacob must wrestle somewhere else; the man of God looked at the spot, and went his way, but in spirit he still raised an altar in that Bethel, and praised the God of his salvation.

"He has gone to his rest after having fought a good fight, but the prayers of Honeywood Park are blessing his children, and his children's children to the third generation at this very hour. To them and all the world his testimony is, 'Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you;' and equally does he instruct us to 'Bless the Lord, and forget not all His benefits.'"

One or two other anecdotes may here be given of the venerable pastor. The first illustrates his uprightness and conscientiousness in things about which many professing Christians are not always straight. When in middle life he intended to exercise his right as a voter for the county at the general election, but his qualification was disputed. The reason assigned was that all the trustees of the manse and land were dead. He was advised that, as he had had undisputed possession for more than twenty-one years, he should go home, make his will, and leave the property to his children, as it had become legally his. This tempting proposal, however, he refused, and at once called

a meeting of the church-members and subscribers, and put the entire property in trust, according to the will and intentions of the donor. As he had a large family, and was really poor, this was a great triumph of principle over interest.

An anecdote is related of the old gentleman, which illustrates alike his faith in divine providence, and God's faithfulness to him in a trying exigency. The large family and the small income of the pastor made it difficult to get along in the world; but he loved his Master, and he loved his work, and on no account would he give up the ministry for a more remunerative profession; so he tried to help his income by the cultivation of a few acres of ground, keeping a cow to supply the family with milk. One day, when he went to the cow, she fell back with the staggers, and died. "James," said Mrs. Spurgeon to her husband, "how will God provide for the dear children now? What shall we do for milk?" "Mother," said he, "God has said that He will provide, and I believe that He could send us fifty cows if He pleased."

It happened that on that very day a number of gentlemen were assembled for a certain purpose in London, some of whom were known to the pastor of Stambourne; they were sitting as a committee for the distribution of money to poor ministers, and they had given something to all who had asked for help. Old Mr. Spurgeon had never asked for any; he preferred, by rigid economy, and labor on his land, to

meet his requirements without appealing to others. When all the cases had been dealt with there remained a balance of £5. What should they do with it?

"Well," said one, "there is a Mr. Spurgeon down at Stambourne, in Essex, a poor minister, who needs some help."

"Oh," said another, "don't send him £5; I will put £5 to it; I know him; he is a worthy man."

"No," said another, "don't send him £10. I will give £5, if some one else will add another £5, and make it £20."

The next morning Mr. Spurgeon received a letter for which there was *ninepence to pay*. The old lady begrudged ninepence for a letter, but when it was opened, it was found to contain £20. Her husband, on seeing the money, remarked to his wife, "Now, can't you trust God about an old cow?"

In relating this anecdote, his distinguished grandson remarked: —

"I think of my dear old grandfather, and of what he used to say to me. If he were here to-night, — I am glad he is not, because he is in heaven, and that is a much better place for him, — but if he could come from heaven, and could talk as he used to do when he was here on earth, he would say, 'Ah, my boy, I *did* find him a faithful God.'"

Old James Spurgeon was very popular with the people in Essex, where he was widely known, being frequently asked to preach on special occasions, such

THE OLD MANSE AND MEETING-HOUSE, STAMBOURNE.

as anniversary seasons. His own chapel was of considerable size, and on the Sabbath afternoons it was well filled, the farmers for many miles around driving in for the services. A long range of stables was connected with the chapel for the convenience of such of the congregation as required it for their horses.

When the venerable grandsire was eighty, his grandson was on a preaching tour in Essex. The old minister heard of it, and sent him a letter asking him to call and see him once more. He arrived as early as eight o'clock one morning, but the old pastor had been some time on the outlook for "his boy." It was a memorable occasion, and the cheerful old gentleman was delighted with the visit, and went over some of the principal scenes in his long life, dwelling with especial pleasure on his college tutor at Hoxton, on the many trials and deliverances he had experienced, and on the many friends he had known, and who had preceded him to the better land, where he hoped soon to rejoin them. The grandson treasured up these reminiscences, and upon his stores we have chiefly drawn for the above incidents.

In the year 1856 Mr. Spurgeon preached a sermon at Stambourne, on the occasion of his grandfather completing the fiftieth year of his ministry. The date of this interesting event was 27th May, and the sermon may be found, as preached at New Park Street the previous Lord's day, in Nos. 81, 82, of "The New

Park Street Pulpit." The old man had great delight in promoting the sale of the sermons and other publications of his eminent grandson, always seeking to get an early supply.

The venerable pastor at Stambourne, like his elder grandson, was gifted with a large head, and there was no small stock of what was good in it. He had a good voice, and was very earnest and practical in his preaching, at the same time giving due prominence to the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel. In person he was the very picture of neatness, his dress cravat, frilled shirt, knee breeches, buckled shoes, and silk stockings, marking him out as one belonging to the past age rather than the present. He is said to have somewhat resembled Rev. John Wesley in his manners and stature, as also in his staid, quiet, and uniform dress and habits. In this respect, as also in his preaching, he was regarded throughout his native county as a venerable minister of the old school. For more than half a century he walked among the people and before the world with unblemished reputation. The secret of which, was, *he walked humbly with his God.* His affable manners, his genuine piety, and his uniform excellence of character, procured for him the good-will of his neighbors; and, though a thorough Nonconformist, he was on brotherly terms with some of the parochial clergy, and often went to the parish church to hear the sermon, especially when the cause of missions was to be advocated. He was

blessed with a wife who was a partaker with him of "like precious faith;" she showed "piety at home,"

MRS. JAMES SPURGEON.

and was a true helpmeet to her husband in every good word and work.

The old gentleman held firmly to Puritan theology,

and throughout his ministry kept back nothing, but declared all the counsel of God. He was a great favorite with the young; children gathered around him, and with a strength of attachment which riper years did not unsettle; while young people felt that they had in him a wise counsellor, a loving father, and a faithful pastor.

In his last illness he was sustained and comforted by the truths of the gospel he had so long and so faithfully proclaimed. It was his desire that he might be permitted to bear witness for Christ on his dying bed, and God granted him his desire. He said the gospel was his only hope; he was "on the Rock of Ages, immutable as the throne of God." His departure from earth was marked by joy and peace in believing, and with a glorious prospect of an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

During the last two years of his life, he had the assistance in the pulpit of various ministers, but he continued to preach as often as health and strength permitted; always, even to the end, administering the Lord's Supper. He ceased his labors, and entered into rest, 12th February, 1864, when in his eighty-eighth year. His remains rest near his beloved sanctuary, to which resting-place of the worn and wearied body an immense concourse of people, and many endeared friends, attended him. The tears and sympathy of the people showed how much he was loved

and respected. Funeral sermons were preached at Stambourne by Rev. Mr. Bridge, of Ridgewell; at Cranbrook, Kent, by his son, Rev. John Spurgeon; and at the Metropolitan Tabernacle by his distinguished grandson. He left eight children, seven of whom were members of Christian churches, the elder son then being a deacon at Stambourne, and the younger, Rev. John Spurgeon, pastor of the Independent Church at Cranbrook, the chief town of the Weald of Kent.

The following is a copy of the memorial in the present Stambourne meeting-house.

IN MEMORY OF

THE REV. JAMES SPURGEON,

Who for fifty-four years was the faithful and beloved Pastor of the Church in this place, and for four years previously of the Independent Church at Clare.

He departed this life on the 12th day of February, 1864,

In the 88th year of his age.

CHAPTER III.

C. H. SPURGEON'S FATHER AND MOTHER.

REV. JOHN SPURGEON is taller than his son Charles Haddon, and carries a fine figure, possesses a warm heart, and is one of the most genial guests the writer has ever had the pleasure of entertaining. Though past eighty, he is still an interesting preacher. For sixteen years, while in business in Colchester, he discharged the duties of pastor to the Independent Church at Tollesbury, and it was only in middle life that he devoted all his time and energies to the ministry. Of his seventeen children, Charles Haddon is the oldest, one brother and six sisters being still living.

The mother of the great preacher, who passed away two years ago, was the youngest sister of Charles Parker Jarvis, Esq., of Colchester. Wherever she has resided, she has been known and esteemed for her sincere piety, Christian humility, and various works of usefulness in connection with the cause of the Redeemer. The prayerful solicitude and earnest care with which she trained up her children have been abundantly rewarded.

Speaking one day to her son Charles of her solicitude for the best interests of all her children, she said, "Ah, Charlie, I have often prayed that you might be saved, but never that you should become a Baptist." To this Charles replied, "The Lord has answered your prayer with his usual bounty, and given you more than you asked."

The parents of the great preacher must have made considerable sacrifices, and exercised much self-denial to give a good education to their children, and to train them up in habits of thrift; but how abundantly have they been rewarded; and what a blessed recompense there has been, in the thousands of members of the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, the hundreds of ministers trained in the Pastors' College, the multitude of orphans cared for in the Stockwell Orphanage, and in the various other benevolent and philanthropic enterprises which have had their origin through the ministry of their renowned elder son, and which have also been greatly indebted to the efficient management of their younger son.

REV. JOHN SPURGEON.

MRS. JOHN SPURGEON.

CHAPTER IV.

BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE OF MR. SPURGEON.

THE village homes of England have been justly celebrated as the cradles and nurseries of many of her greatest men. There is something in village life, much as it is misunderstood, — sometimes decried, and sometimes vaguely applauded, —which is favorable to the development of native genius. The towns are supposed to have more advantages than the country for the nurture of intelligence and the training of the expanding mind, but the country has been more prolific of greatness than the towns and cities. Mr. Spurgeon was village-born. Kelvedon, Essex, a village of about two thousand inhabitants, was the place of his nativity. The house, as represented in the adjacent cut, is no noble pile, though a remove or two higher up than the common rural cottage. The birth of the great preacher took place 19th June, 1834.

The parish was blessed with an incumbent who occupied the sphere long enough to celebrate his jubilee. His was a life of consistent piety, and it told for good

MR. SPURGEON'S BIRTHPLACE, KELVEDON, ESSEX.

on his parishioners. The Spurgeons were Nonconformists, and from their earliest days had been taught the principles of evangelical faith and Christian duty.

Almost as soon as he was old enough to leave home, Charles was removed to his grandfather's house at Stambourne. A maiden aunt took the promising child into her especial care; and there, under the immediate oversight of the grandfather, he soon developed into a thoughtful boy, commonly fonder of his books than of his play. He would sometimes sit for hours gazing with childish horror at the grim figures of Bishops Bonner and Gardiner, and at the pictures of the martyrs, in "Fox's Martyrology;" or tracing the adventures of Christian in "The Pilgrim's Progress;" or feasting his fancy on the wonderful adventures of "Robinson Crusoe." The precocity of the child drew the attention of all around. He would astonish the grave deacons and matrons, who met at his grandfather's house on Sabbath evenings, by proposing subjects for conversation, and offering pertinent remarks upon them; and there were at that early period of his life palpable indications of that decision of character and boldness of address for which he has become so remarkable.

One day, before he was six years old, seeing a professor of religion standing in the village street with persons of other than good character, he went up to the big man, and astonished him by asking, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

At the age of seven, when his father had removed to Colchester, he returned home that he might have the advantages of improved education. The development of the mind was still far in advance of his years; and his moral character, especially his love of truth, was even more so.

In 1844, when he was just ten years old, he went to spend the summer vacation at his grandfather's, when an incident occurred which had a considerable influence on the boy at the time, and still more in subsequent years. We may narrate it in Mr. Spurgeon's own words, under the title of —

THE REV. RICHARD KNILL'S PROPHECY.

"When I was a small boy," writes Mr. Spurgeon, "I was staying at my grandfather's, where I had aforetime spent my earliest days, and as the manner was, I read the Scriptures at family prayer. Once upon a time, when reading the passage in the Book of Revelation which mentions the bottomless pit, I paused and said, 'Grandpa, what can this mean?' The answer was kind but unsatisfactory: 'Pooh, pooh, child, go on!' The child intended, however, to have an explanation, and therefore selected the same chapter morning after morning, Sunday included, and always halted at the same verse to repeat the inquiry. At length the venerable patriarch capitulated at discretion by saying, 'Well, dear, what is it that puzzles you?' Now, the child had often seen baskets

with bottoms, which in course of wear became bottomless, and allowed the fruit placed therein to fall upon the ground. Here, then, was the puzzle: if the pit aforesaid had no bottom, where would all the people fall to who had dropped out at its lower end? A puzzle which rather startled the propriety of family

REV. RICHARD KNILL.

worship, and had to be laid aside for explanation at a more convenient season.

"Questions of the like simple and natural character would frequently break up into paragraphs the family Bible-reading, and had there not been a world of love and license allowed to the inquisitive reader, he would soon have been deposed from his office. As

it was, the Scriptures were not very badly rendered, and were probably quite as interesting as if they had not been interspersed with original and curious inquiries.

"On one of these occasions Mr. Knill, then of Chester, now of 'New Jerusalem,' whose name is a household word, and whose memory is precious to thousands at home and abroad, stayed at the minister's house on Friday, in readiness to preach at Stambourne for the London Missionary Society on the following Sunday. He never looked into a young face without yearning to impart some spiritual gift. He was all love, kindness, earnestness, and warmth, and coveted the souls of men as misers desire the gold their hearts pine for. He heard the boy read, and commended him. A little judicious praise is the sure way to win a young heart. An agreement was made with the lad that on the next morning, Saturday, he would show Mr. Knill over the garden, and take him for a walk before breakfast; a task so flattering to juvenile self-importance was sure to be entered upon. There was a tap at the door, and the child was soon out of bed and in the garden with his new friend, who won his heart at once by pleasing stories and kind words, and by giving him a chance to communicate in return. The talk was all about Jesus, and the pleasantness of loving him. Nor was it mere talk; there was pleading too. Into the great yew-tree arbor, cut into the shape of a sugar-loaf, both went, and the

soul-winner knelt down, and with his arms around the youthful neck, he poured out vehement intercession for the salvation of the lad. The next morning witnessed the same instruction and supplication, and the next also; while all day long the pair were never far apart, and never out of each other's thoughts. The mission sermons were preached in the old Puritan meeting-house, and the man of God was called to go to the next halting-place in his tour as deputation for the Society, but he did not leave till he had uttered a most remarkable prophecy. After even more earnest prayer with his little *protégé*, he appeared to have a burden on his mind, and he could not go till he had eased himself of it. In after years he was heard to say that he felt a singular interest in me, and an earnest expectation for which he could not account. Calling the family together, he took me on his knee, and I distinctly remember his saying: 'I do not know how it is, but I feel a solemn presentiment that this child will preach the gospel to thousands, and God will bless him to many souls. So sure am I of this, that when my little man preaches in Rowland Hill's chapel, as he will do one day, I should like him to promise me that he will give out the hymn commencing, —

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform."'

This promise was of course made, and was followed by another, namely, that at his express desire I would

THE ARBOR IN ITS PRESENT CONDITION.

learn the hymn in question, and think of what he had said.

"The prophetic declaration was fulfilled. When I had the pleasure of preaching the Word of life in Surrey Chapel, and also when I preached in Mr. Hill's first pulpit at Wotton-under-Edge, the hymn was sung on both occasions. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfilment? I think so. I believed them, and looked forward to the time when I should preach the word. I felt very powerfully that no unconverted person might dare to enter the ministry. This made me more intent on seeking salvation, and more hopeful of it; and when by grace I was enabled to cast myself on the Saviour's love, it was not long before my mouth began to speak of His redemption. How came that sober-minded minister to speak thus to and of one into whose future God alone could see? How came it that he lived to rejoice with his younger brother in the truth of all that he had spoken? The answer is plain. But mark one particular lesson: would to God that we were all as wise as Richard Knill in habitually sowing beside all waters! Mr. Knill might very naturally have left the minister's little grandson on the plea that he had other duties of more importance than praying with children; and yet who shall say that he did not effect as much by that simple act of humble kindness as by dozens of sermons addressed to crowded audiences? To me his tenderness in considering the little one was

fraught with everlasting consequences, and I must ever feel that his time was well laid out."

In a letter written by the venerable James Spurgeon to a friend, there are a few additional particulars. He remarks: "Good Mr. Knill, laying his venerable hands on the child's head, said, 'I have heard old ministers and young ones read well, but never did I hear a little boy read so correctly before. I hope he will one day fill Rowland Hill's pulpit.'

"When Mr. Knill first heard of my grandson being in London, he wrote to me for his address. The reason he gave was that, being then from home, and meeting with a large party of friends at dinner, the conversation turned upon a wonderful preacher who was pastor at New Park Street Chapel, London. Inquiring his name, he was told it was Spurgeon. 'Spurgeon, Spurgeon?' said Mr. Knill, 'I know him.'

"'No, no,' replied his friend; 'I think not.'

"'Yes, I do,' returned Mr. Knill, 'I saw him at his grandfather's house some years ago, when I preached in the village for the missionary cause, and I have always been convinced that he would one day be a most extraordinary character in the Christian world. I remember taking the lad into the garden; I conversed with him, and prayed with him, and found that he possessed a mind far beyond his years.'"

Until the erection of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, "Rowland Hill's Chapel" was the largest Nonconformist place of worship in London, at least south

of the Thames. It was the place for great gatherings in connection with missions, both for the London and the Baptist Missionary Societies. It was a kind of Nonconformist Cathedral, and to preach in it, especially on a great occasion, was deemed no small honor. Mr. Spurgeon has preached there on several occasions, and during the cleaning and re-painting of the Tabernacle on one occasion, the trustees of the Chapel kindly placed the building at his disposal for week-night services. Among his published sermons there are two (numbers 767 and 768) which were preached in what was known as Surrey Chapel.

There were several habits which marked the character of the future great preacher from very early days. One was his love for the house of God and the worship of the sanctuary. He was not only willing to go, but it was a pleasure and a delight to be found there. Another trait in his character was his love of truth. Never did he prevaricate or deny or hide the truth, and never was there occasion to question his word. Yet another feature in his character was his love of prayer. His father says that Charles was often found in the hay-rick, or the manger, praying, or reading aloud, and sometimes talking and preaching to his brother and sisters.

Not less was he remarkable for the depth of his feeling, and for a strong and determined will. The last was at one time a cause of anxiety to his parents, and earnestly did they pray that his strong passions

and determined will might be properly controlled and directed.

Mr. Spurgeon's educational advantages were above those of many in the sphere of life in which his parents moved. He went first to Mr. Walker's school at Colchester, and afterwards spent four years in the same town in the school conducted by Mr. Henry Lewis. Here he became a personal friend of Mr Leeding, the head usher, to whom he was indebted for a thorough grounding in Latin and Mathematics. He was also, for twelve months, at an Agricultural College at Maidstone; and afterwards he went to Newmarket to be an assistant in the school of Mr. Swindell. There he pursued his studies with remarkable diligence. Here also his faith grew, and his zeal for the cause of the Redeemer abounded. He had to practise self-denial, too, for his means were small and his purse light; but all was done in order to obtain knowledge, that he might therewith serve his God and Saviour.

We have, however, somewhat anticipated the story of Mr. Spurgeon's conversion, which is fully described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

MR. SPURGEON'S CONVERSION AND BAPTISM.

WE give the story of Mr. Spurgeon's conversion in his own words. Speaking of the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, he says: —

"I will tell you how I myself was brought to the knowledge of this truth. It may happen that the telling of it will bring some one else to Christ. It pleased God in my childhood to convince me of sin. I lived a miserable creature, finding no hope, no comfort, thinking that surely God would never save me. At last the worst came to the worst, — I was miserable; I could do scarcely anything. My heart was broken in pieces. Six months did I pray; prayed agonizingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. I resolved that, in the town where I lived, I would visit every place of worship, in order to find out the way of salvation. I felt I was willing to do anything, and be anything, if God would only forgive me. I set off, determined to go round to all the chapels, and I went to all the places of worship; and though I dearly venerate the men that occupy those

pulpits now, and did so then, I am bound to say that I never heard them once fully preach the gospel. I mean by that, they preached truth, great truths, many good truths that were fitting to many of their congregations, — spiritually minded people; but what I wanted to know was, How can I get my sins forgiven? and they never told me that. I wanted to hear how a poor sinner, under a sense of sin, might find peace with God; and when I went I heard a sermon on, 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked,' which cut me up worse, but did not say how I might escape. I went again another day, and the text was something about the glories of the righteous; nothing for poor me! I was something like a dog under the table, not allowed to eat of the children's food. I went time after time, and I can honestly say I don't know that I ever went without prayer to God, and I am sure there was not a more attentive hearer in all the place than myself, for I panted and longed to understand how I might be saved.

"At last, one snowy day, — it snowed so much I could not go to the place I had determined to go to, and I was obliged to stop on the road, and it was a blessed stop to me, — I found rather an obscure street, and turned down a court, and there was a little chapel. I wanted to go somewhere, but I did not know this place. It was the Primitive Methodist Chapel. I had heard of these people from many, and how they sang so loudly that they made people's

heads ache; but that did not matter. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they made my head ache ever so much, I did not care. So, sitting down, the service went on, but no minister came; at last a very thin-looking man came into the pulpit, and opened his Bible, and read these words: 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.' Just setting his eyes upon me, as if he knew all my heart, he said, 'Young man, you are in trouble.' Well, I was, sure enough. Says he, 'You will never get out of it unless you look to Christ.' And then, lifting up his hands, he cried out, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, 'Look, look, look! It is only look,' said he. I saw at once the way of salvation. Oh, how I did leap for joy at that moment! I know not what else he said. I did not take much notice of it; I was so possessed with that one thought. Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, they only looked and were healed. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard this word, 'Look,' what a charming word it seemed to me! Oh, I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away; and in heaven I will look on still in my joy unutterable!"

Mr. Spurgeon, with all his strong attachment to truths which relate to divine sovereignty, — and he has ever been bold and unflinching in his proclamation of them, — has always presented the other side of Calvinism, the call of the gospel to all who hear it; hence, he says, as one of the lessons of his own conversion: —

"I now think I am bound never to preach a sermon without preaching to sinners. I do think that a minister who can preach a sermon without addressing sinners, does not know how to preach."

Several years after his conversion, on 11th October, 1864, Mr. Spurgeon preached in the Primitive Methodist Chapel at Colchester, and took for his text the ever-memorable words (Isa. xlv. 22), "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," &c. "That was the text," said he, "that I heard preached from in this chapel when the Lord converted me." And pointing to a seat on the left hand, under the gallery, he said, "*I was sitting in that pew when I was converted.*" This grateful reference to the place and work done by the Lord there made a profound impression on the congregation, the hearts of many being thrilled with joy, and drawn out in love to the young preacher.

Going back to Mr. Spurgeon's early ministerial life, we can distinctly trace the groundwork of that steadfast adherence to Puritan theology for which he has been so remarkable all through his public career. His sentiments at that early time have been preserved in the following letter written to one of his uncles: —

(Date.)

My dear Uncle, — Dumb men make no mischief. Your silence and my neglect make me think of the days when letters were costly, and not of penny postage. You have doubtless heard

of me as a top-tree Antinomian. I trust you know enough of me to disbelieve it. It is an object of my life to disprove the slander. I groan daily under a body of sin and corruption. Oh, for the time when I shall drop this flesh, and be free from sin! I am become more and more convinced that to attempt to be saved by a mixed covenant of works and faith is, in the words of Berridge, 'to yoke a snail with an elephant.' I desire to press forward for direction to my Master in all things; but as to trusting to my own obedience and righteousness, I should be worse than a fool, and ten times worse than a madman. Poor dependent creatures! prayer had need be our constant employment; the foot of the throne our continual dwelling-place; for the Rock of Ages is our only safe hiding-place. I rejoice in an assured knowledge by faith of an interest in Christ, and of the certainty of my eternal salvation. Yet what strivings, what conflicts, what dangers, what enemies are in my way! The foes in my heart are so strong that they would have killed me and sent me to hell ere this, had the Lord left me; but, blessed be His name! His electing, redeeming, and saving love has got fast hold of me; and who is able to pluck me out of my Father's hand? On my bended knees I have often cried for succor; and, bless His name! He has hitherto heard my cry. Oh, if I did not know that all the Lord's people have soul-contentions, I should give up all for lost! I rejoice that the promises left on record are meant for me, as well as for every saint of His, and as such I desire to grasp them. Let the whole earth, and even God's professing people, cast out my name as evil, my Lord and Master will not. I glory in the distinguishing grace of God, and will not, by the grace of God, stir one inch from my principles, or think of adhering to the present fashionable sort of religion.

Oh, could I become like holy men of past ages, — fearless of men, holding sweet communion with God, weaned more from the world, and enabled to fix my thoughts on spiritual things entirely! But when I would serve God I find my old deceitful heart full of the very essence of hell, rising up into my mouth, polluting all I say and all I do. What should I

do if, like you, I were called to be engaged about things of time and sense? I fear I should be neither diligent in business nor fervent in spirit. 'But' (say you) 'he keeps talking all about himself.' True, he does; he cannot help it. Self is too much his master. I am proud of my own ignorance, and, like a toad, bloated with my venomous pride, — proud of what I have not got, and boasting when I should be moaning. I trust you have greater freedom from your own corruptions than I have, and in secret, social, and family prayer, enjoy more blessed, sanctified liberty at the footstool of mercy.

Rejoice! for heaven awaits us, and all the Lord's family! The mansion is ready; the crown is made; the harp is strung; and there are no willows there. May we be enabled to go on, bold as lions, valiant for the truth and cause of King Jesus, and by the help of the Spirit vow eternal warfare against every sin, and rest not until the Sword of the Spirit has destroyed all the enemies in our hearts!

May we be enabled to trust the Lord, for he will help us. We must conquer, we cannot be lost. Lost! Impossible. For who is able to snatch us out of our Father's hands?

May the Lord bless you exceedingly.

Your affectionate nephew,

C. H. Spurgeon.

In this remarkable letter it is not difficult to trace the future eminent preacher and sound divine; and while it may seem to some to contain expressions beyond the experience of many ordinary Christians, and very unusual in one who was still but a youth, it must be remembered that he was in no sense an ordinary individual, and that there was in him, even at this early period, the making of the future man, and the distinct foreshadowing of the well-instructed and deeply taught witness for the truth of God.

While Mr. Spurgeon was still at Newmarket a fierce struggle was going on in his mind. He was assailed by unbelief in one of its most hateful forms. From doubting some things, he came to question all things, even his own existence. The conflict was not long, but exceedingly fierce and determined. Speaking of a freethinker, he says: "I too have been like him. There was an evil hour in which I slipped the anchors of my faith. I cut the cable of my belief. I no longer moored myself hard by the coast of Revelation. I allowed my vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity. I said to reason, 'Be thou my captain;' I said to my own brain, 'Be thou my rudder;' and I started on my mad voyage. Thank God! it is all over now; but I will tell you its brief history: it was one hurried sailing over the tempestuous sea of free-thought. Satan often overshoots his mark; the terrible wickedness of his horrid blasphemies, like a too heavy charge of powder, bursts the gun, and he and his cause are damaged, while the object he sought to destroy escapes to sing of delivering grace and redeeming love."

During Mr. Spurgeon's residence at Newmarket his mind became exercised concerning the subject of baptism. His father, his grandfather, and his ancestors, had held and practised infant sprinkling. To seem to be wiser on this subject than his parents and his forefathers for several generations might be

mistaken for self-assertion; but the prayerful searching of the Word led him to the full conviction that the baptism of Holy Scripture is immersion, upon a profession of faith personally made. After some correspondence his father, satisfied that his son attached no saving efficacy either to the water or the act of baptism, and that his motives were high and holy, withdrew his objections, and the necessary steps were taken in accordance with the son's desire. His last letter on this subject was written on 1st May, 1850. In it he says: "If I know my own heart I believe the sentiment uppermost there is that salvation is not of man,—that no works, however holy, contribute in the least to save my soul; that the work is all of God's sovereign electing love, and that if ever I am saved it will be by His power alone."

On the 3d of May the baptism took place. Mr. Spurgeon's own account of the transaction is so interesting, and so full of pathos and devout emotion, mingled with graphic narration, that we transfer the description from "The Sword and the Trowel" for April, 1890.

"In January, 1850, I was enabled, by divine grace, to lay hold on Jesus Christ as my Saviour, while hearing the gospel preached at Colchester. Being called, in the providence of God, to live at Newmarket as usher in a school, I essayed to join myself to the church of believers in that town; but according to my reading of Holy Scripture, the be-

liever in Christ should be buried with him in baptism, and so enter upon his open Christian life. I cast about to find a Baptist minister, and I failed to find one nearer than Isleham, in the Fen country, where resided a certain Mr. W. W. Cantlow, who had once been a missionary in Jamaica, but was then pastor of one of the Isleham Baptist churches. My parents wished me to follow my own convictions, Mr. Cantlow arranged to baptize me, and my employer gave me a day's holiday for the purpose.

"I can never forget the 3d of May, 1850; it was my mother's birthday, and I myself was within a few weeks of being sixteen years of age. I was up early, to have a couple of hours for quiet prayer and dedication to God. Then I had some eight miles to walk, to reach the spot where I was to be immersed into the Triune name, according to the sacred command. What a walk it was! What thoughts and prayers thronged my soul during that morning's journey. It was by no means a warm day, and therefore all the better for the two or three hours of quiet foot-travel which I enjoyed. The sight of Mr. Cantlow's smiling face was a full reward for that country tramp. I think I see the good man now, and the white ashes of the turf fire by which we stood and talked together about the solemn exercise which lay before us.

"We went together to the Ferry, for the Isleham friends had not degenerated to indoor immersion, in

ISLEHAM FERRY — BAPTIZING PLACE.

a bath made by the art of man, but used the ampler baptistery of the flowing river.

"Isleham Ferry, on the river Lark, is a very quiet spot, half a mile from the village, and rarely disturbed by traffic at any time of the year. The river itself is a beautiful stream, dividing Cambridgeshire from Suffolk, and is dear to local anglers. The navigation of this little river Lark is soon to be reopened between Bury-St.-Edmund's and the sea at Lynn ; but at Isleham it is more in its infancy.

"The ferry-house, hidden in the picture by the trees, is freely opened for the convenience of minister and candidates at a baptizing. Where the barge is hauled up for repairs the preacher takes his stand, when the baptizing is on a week-day and there are few spectators present. But on Lord's-day, when great numbers are attracted, the preacher, standing in a barge moored mid-stream, speaks the Word to the crowds on both sides of the river. This can be done the more easily, as the river is not very wide. Where three persons are seen at a stand is the usual place for entering the water. The right depth, with sure footing, may soon be found and so the delightful service proceeds in the gently flowing stream. No accident or disorder has ever marred the proceedings. In the course of seven or eight miles the Lark serves no fewer than five Baptist churches, and they would on no account give up baptizing out of doors.

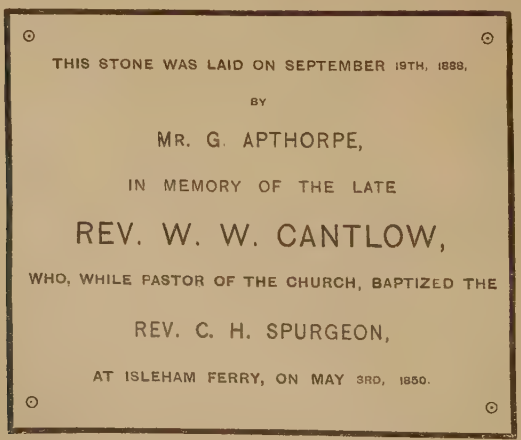
"To me," resumes Mr. Spurgeon, "there seemed a great concourse on that week-day. Dressed, I believe, in a jacket, with a boy's turn-down collar, I attended the service previous to the ordinance; but all remembrance of it has gone from me. My thoughts were in the water, sometimes with my Lord in joy, and sometimes with myself in trembling awe at making so public a confession. There were first to be baptized two women, Diana Wilkinson and Eunice Fuller, and I was asked to conduct them through the water to the minister; but this I most timidly declined. It was a new experience to me, never having seen a baptism before, and I was afraid of making some mistake. The wind blew down the river with a cutting blast as my turn came to wade into the flood; but after I had walked a few steps, and noted the people on the ferry-boat and in boats and on either shore, I felt as if heaven and earth and hell might all gaze upon me; for I was not ashamed, there and then, to own myself a follower of the Lamb. Timidity was gone; I have scarcely met with it since. I lost a thousand fears in that river Lark, and found that 'in keeping His commandments there is great reward.' It was a thrice happy day to me. God be praised for the preserving goodness which allows me to write of it with delight at the distance of forty years!

"'Many days have passed since then,
Many changes I have seen;
Yet have been upheld till now;
Who could hold me up but Thou?'"

In a note in the magazine above-mentioned, Pastor J. A. Wilson, the successor of Mr. Cantlow at Isleham, remarks: —

"The recollection of the service at the riverside is fondly cherished by several still living, who rejoice that they were there. But the most precious memory of that day is the prayer-meeting in the vestry in the evening, when Mr. Spurgeon prayed, and people wondered and wept for joy, as they listened to the lad. One may be excused for envying those who were there."

The people at Isleham have commemorated Mr. Spurgeon's connection with the place in a way which will perpetuate the memorable event. When, in 1888, they built a new schoolroom, adjoining the chapel, a stone was laid which bears the following inscription:


THIS STONE WAS LAID ON SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1888,
BY
MR. G. APTHORPE,
IN MEMORY OF THE LATE
REV. W. W. CANTLOW,
WHO, WHILE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH, BAPTIZED THE
REV. C. H. SPURGEON,
AT ISLEHAM FERRY, ON MAY 3RD, 1850.

It may be well to add here Mr. Spurgeon's remarks on reviewing the act and proceedings of the day, after the space of forty years. He says: —

"If any ask why was I thus baptized, I answer, because I believed it to be an ordinance of Christ, very specially joined by Him with faith in His name. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' I had no superstitious idea that baptism would save me, for I was saved. I did not seek to have sin washed away by water, for I believed that my sins were forgiven me through faith in Christ Jesus. Yet I regarded baptism as the token to the believer of cleansing, the emblem of his burial with his Lord, and the outward avowal of his new birth. I did not trust in *it;* but because I trusted in Jesus as my Saviour I felt bound to obey Him as my Lord, and follow the example which he set us in Jordan, in His own baptism. I did not fulfil the outward ordinance to join a party, and become a Baptist, but to be a Christian after the apostolic fashion; for they, when they believed, were baptized.

"It is now questioned whether John Bunyan was baptized; but the same question can never be raised concerning *me*. I, who scarcely belong to any sect, am, nevertheless, by no means willing to have it doubted in time to come whether or no I followed the conviction of my heart. I read the New Testament for myself, and saw believers' baptism there; and I had no mind to neglect what I saw to be the Lord's

order. If others see not as I do, to their own Master they stand or fall; but for me, the perceptions of my understanding in spiritual things were the law of my life, and I hope they will always be so. Dear reader, let us follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth!"

With the youthful Spurgeon a profession of faith meant something. It was the beginning of a fight,—a fight with error, wickedness, and unbelief. He began at once to sow the seed of the kingdom, in the Sunday-school, and in the houses and highways and by-ways of the town and neighborhood. He revived an old society for distributing tracts, and did the work of tract-distribution himself most effectually. His addresses in the Sunday-school were so deeply instructive, so full of love, and so attractive in manner, that the children were not only delighted, but they carried home the report of what they had heard; and soon the vestry of the Independent Chapel was filled with parents and children, who gathered to hear the addresses of the young usher, whose words were so full of interest, so full of fire and love.

At one of the examinations of the school, Mr. Spurgeon had consented to give an address on missions. It was a public occasion, and in the audience was a clergyman. During the examination the clergyman heard of the death of his gardener, and at once left for home; but while on his way he began to reason with himself thus: "The gardener

is dead ; I cannot restore his life ; I will return and hear what the young usher has to say on missions." He returned, heard the address, and showed his approval by presenting the young speaker with a sovereign, — an act this which conferred honor alike on the giver and the recipient.

While residing at Newmarket Mr. Spurgeon competed for a prize offered by Mr. Arthur Morley, of Nottingham, cousin to Mr. Samuel Morley, M. P., for the best essay on Popery. He did not secure the prize, but the adjudicator, the late Rev. George Smith, D.D., of Poplar, sent him an encouraging letter, and a present of money from Mr. Morley, in the hope that he would employ his talents for the public good. The manuscript has never been published, but it has been bound, and bears the endorsement, " Written by a boy under sixteen years of age."

At the close of the one eventful year which he spent at Newmarket Mr. Spurgeon removed to Cambridge, where his former friend, Mr. Henry Leeding, had opened a school for young gentlemen. Lighter duties, greater comforts, and more time at his own disposal, left room for advance in all his studies.

The Baptist Church in St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge, has had several distinguished pastors. The famous Robert Robinson, author of well-known standard works, and writer of the hymns beginning, —

"Come, thou fount of every blessing,"

and

"Mighty God! while angels bless thee,"

ranks first in order of time. Then followed the more famous Robert Hall, and in later times, Rev. William Robinson, who commenced his ministry in 1852.

On taking up his residence in Cambridge Mr. Spurgeon at once identified himself with St. Andrew's Street Church. Before long he became a member of the society, originated by Robert Hall, entitled "The Lay Preachers' Association." His reputation as a public speaker must have secured him admittance, as he was still only a youth. The fact is that his attempts at public edification had awakened in his mind a desire to devote himself to the work of God in a public way; and others had already perceived that the Lord had called him to preach the gospel. The story of his first sermon must have a chapter by itself, as it marks so important an epoch in Mr. Spurgeon's career.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. SPURGEON'S FIRST SERMON.

A MINISTER'S first essay at preaching is oftentimes made under peculiar and unexpected circumstances. It was so with the youthful Spurgeon. He had been asked to go to the village of Teversham, four miles from Cambridge, to accompany a friend whom he supposed to be the preacher for the evening. On the way Mr. Spurgeon said, "I trust God will bless your labors to-night." "My labors?" said he, "Oh! dear, I never preached in my life; I never thought of doing such a thing. I was asked to walk with *you*, and I sincerely hope God will bless *you* in *your* preaching." "Nay!" said young Spurgeon, "but I never preached, and I don't know that I could do anything of the sort." They walked together till they came to the place, "my inmost soul being all in a tremble," says Mr. Spurgeon, "as to what would happen. When we found the congregation assembled, and no one else there to speak of Jesus, though I was only sixteen years of age, as I found that I was expected to preach, I did preach;

and the text was, 'Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious' (1 Peter ii. 7)."

This event took place in 1850, and now, after an interval of more than forty years, what have we? Thirty-seven volumes of sermons, a host of books, in large and small volumes, a multitude of booklets and tracts, and all having a world-wide circulation. It has been a wonderful stride from the cottage at Teversham to the Metropolitan Tabernacle and all its surroundings.

We learn from a gentleman who heard that first sermon that it was full of promise, and that the youth, who wore a round jacket, and a broad, turn-down, white collar, preached, prayed, and expounded the Word with much power and effect.

From another person, an aged and experienced Christian, we gather that his early addresses were very instructive, often including illustrations derived from history, geography, astronomy, and other branches of science. In fact, he made good use of his stores of learning, and other acquisitions. He soon became regularly employed of an evening in one or other of the thirteen village stations supplied by the Lay Preachers' Association. One of these was Waterbeach, where especially his preaching was blessed to conversion and edification. The little church in this village was without a pastor, and the people were not slow in urging the young preacher to become their regular minister. A great blessing

COTTAGE AT TEVERSHAM, WHERE MR. SPURGEON FIRST PREACHED.

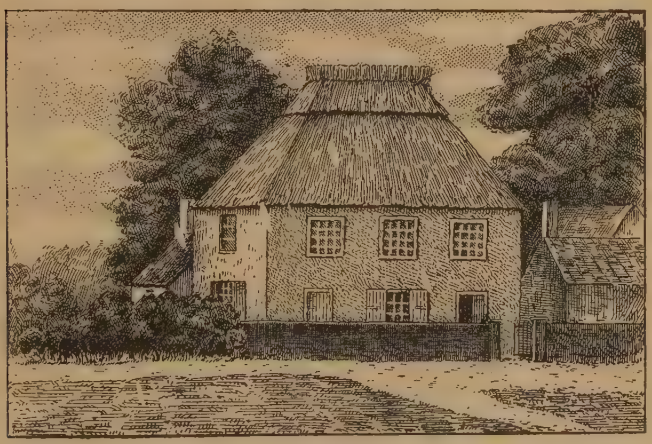
attended him here, so that in a few months the membership rose from forty to nearly a hundred. His popularity grew rapidly, and invitations came in from many places asking him to preach special sermons. The lift which his short pastorate gave the cause at Waterbeach has had the effect of permanently raising it, and it has flourished more or less ever since.

One of the first ministers to take the young preacher by the hand was Cornelius Elven, of Bury-St.-Edmund's, a man of mark in all the region round about his own more immediate sphere. He went to preach the anniversary sermons at Waterbeach in 1852.

"We met at the station," says Mr. Spurgeon, "as he alighted from a third-class carriage, which he had chosen in order to put the friends to the least possible expense for his travelling. His bulk was stupendous, and one soon saw that his heart was as large in proportion as his body. He gave us much sage and holy advice during the visit, which came to us with much the same weight as Paul's words came to Timothy. He bade us study hard, and keep abreast of the foremost Christians in our little church, adding as a reason, that 'if these men, either in their knowledge of Scripture or their power to edify the people, once outstrip you, the temptation will arise among them to be dissatisfied with your ministry, and, however good they are, they will feel their superiority, and others will perceive it too, and

then your place in the church will become difficult to hold.' His sermons were very homely, and pre-eminently practical. He told anecdotes of the usefulness of addressing individuals one by one about their souls."

Mr. Elven delighted to tell the story of this visit. In his diary that evening he wrote: "Have preached to-day at Waterbeach for C. H. Spurgeon. He is a



THE OLD CHAPEL AT WATERBEACH, BURNED IN 1866.

rising star. He will one day make his mark upon the denomination." Mr. Elven used to say: "That day I preached for Mr. Spurgeon, and he gave out the hymns for me; I should be very glad to give out the hymns for him if he would preach for me." The older minister's wish was realized, as his prophecy has been abundantly fulfilled.

We give an incident of Mr. Spurgeon's brief ministry at Waterbeach: One day a gentleman, who was then mayor of Cambridge, asked the youthful preacher if he really had told his people that if a thief got to heaven he would pick the angels' pockets. "Yes, sir," replied Mr. Spurgeon, "I told them that if it were possible for an ungodly man to go to heaven without having his nature changed, he would be none the better for being there; and then, by way of illustration, I said that were a thief to get in he would remain a thief still, and go round the place picking the angels' pockets." "But, my dear young friend, don't you know that the angels have no pockets?" "No, sir; but I am glad to be assured of the fact from a gentleman who does know. I will set it all right."

The following Monday morning Mr. Spurgeon walked into Mr. B.'s shop, and said, "I set that matter right yesterday, sir." "What matter?" "Why, about the angels' pockets!" "What *did* you say?" "Well, I told the people I was sorry to say that I had made a mistake the last time I preached; but that I had met a gentleman — the mayor of Cambridge — who had told me that the angels had no pockets, so that I must correct what I had said, as I did not want anybody to go away with a false notion about heaven. I would therefore say that, if a thief got among the angels without having his nature changed, he would steal the feathers out of their wings."

CHAPTER VII.

MR SPURGEON'S PROPOSED COLLEGE TRAINING.

SOON after Mr. Spurgeon was settled at Waterbeach he was strongly advised, by his father and other friends, to enter Stepney (now Regent's Park) College, to prepare himself more fully for the ministry. Knowing that learning is never an encumbrance, and is often a great means of usefulness, he felt inclined to avail himself of the opportunity of attaining it, although he was of the opinion that he might be useful without a college training.

"I consented," he says, "to the opinion of friends, that I should be more useful with it. Dr. Angus, the tutor of the college, visited Cambridge, where I then resided, and it was arranged that we should meet at the house of Mr. Macmillan, the publisher. Thinking and praying over the matter, I entered the house at exactly the time appointed, and was shown into a room, where I waited patiently for a couple of hours, feeling too much impressed with my own insignificance, and the greatness of the tutor from London,

to venture to ring the bell, and inquire the cause of the unreasonably long delay.

"At last, patience having had her perfect work, the bell was set in motion, and on the arrival of the servant, the waiting young man of eighteen was informed that the doctor had tarried in another room, and could stay no longer, so had gone off by train to London. The stupid girl had given no information to the family that any one had called, and he had been shown into the drawing-room; consequently the meeting never came about, although designed by both parties. I was not a little disappointed at the moment; but have a thousand times since then thanked the Lord very heartily for the strange providence which forced my steps into another and far better path."

This subject is a matter of such importance, and involved so much in his case, though it ought not to be construed into a rule in other and ordinary cases, that we append some further remarks from Mr. Spurgeon's own pen: —

"Still holding the idea of entering the collegiate institution, I thought of writing and making an immediate application; but this was not to be. That afternoon, having to preach at a village station, I walked slowly in a meditative frame of mind over Midsummer Common to the little wooden bridge which leads to Chesterton, and in the midst of the Common I was startled by what seemed to me a loud

voice, but which may have been a singular illusion. Whichever it was, the impression it made on my mind was most vivid; I seemed very distinctly to hear the words, 'Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not!' This led me to look at my position from a different point of view, and to challenge my motives and intentions. I remembered my poor, but loving people to whom I ministered, and the souls which had been given me in my humble charge; and although at that time I anticipated obscurity and poverty as the result of the resolve, yet I did there and then renounce the offer of collegiate instruction, determining to abide, for a season at least, with my people, and to remain preaching the Word as long as I had strength to do it. Had it not been for those words I had not been where I am now. Although the ephod is no longer worn by the ministering priest, the Lord guides His people by His wisdom, and orders all their paths in love; and in times of perplexity, by ways mysterious and remarkable, He says to them, 'This is the way; walk ye in it.'"

Mr. Spurgeon has such facility for turning everything to account, that it is not surprising that this incident was made the basis of an address to the students of the Pastors' College, and published in "The Sword and the Trowel" for 1891, under the title of "A Reminiscence and a Warning."

That the question of college training, or no college training, was not treated lightly, but anxiously

weighed and prayed over, is manifest in some of his letters written at the time. In one to his father, dated 9th March, 1852, he says, "I have had all along an aversion to college, and nothing but a feeling that I must not consult myself, but Jesus, could have made me think of it. It appears to my friends at Cambridge that it is my duty to remain with my dear people at Waterbeach; so says the church there, unanimously, and so say three of our deacons at Cambridge."

Writing to his mother in November of the same year, he says, "I am more and more glad that I never went to college. God sends such sunshine on my path, such smiles of grace, that I cannot regret if I have forfeited all my prospects for it. I am conscious I held back from love to God and His cause; and I had rather be poor in His service than rich in my own. I have all that heart can wish for; yea, God giveth more than my desire. My congregation is as great and as loving as ever."

Before we pass on from events that happened during his residence at Cambridge, it may be well to relate a characteristic anecdote which was told to the writer by one of the deacons of St. Andrew's Street Baptist Church. The communion service had been observed in the chapel one Sunday afternoon, and the communicants were passing out. Sitting in the same seat with the youthful member during the service was a gentleman somewhat advanced in years. There seemed rather too much decorum for

the warm-hearted youth, and he felt determined to break through it, by speaking to the gentleman. He responded, but said, "I do not know you." "Not know me?" said the youth; "why, I am one of your brethren; at least, if you mean what we have been doing by communing together as fellow-disciples." The gentleman was quite captivated by the young man's sincerity and simplicity, and they remain fast friends until the present day. We believe that it was at the house of this gentleman that Mr. Spurgeon stayed when he visited Cambridge in 1870, during the session of the Baptist Union, and preached on "Parker's Piece." The throng, consisting of several thousands, was so great, and the desire to speak to the preacher so general, that it was necessary for a number of his more intimate friends to make a circle with their joined hands, in the middle of which he walked until he found refuge in the house of his venerable friend by passing through the garden door.

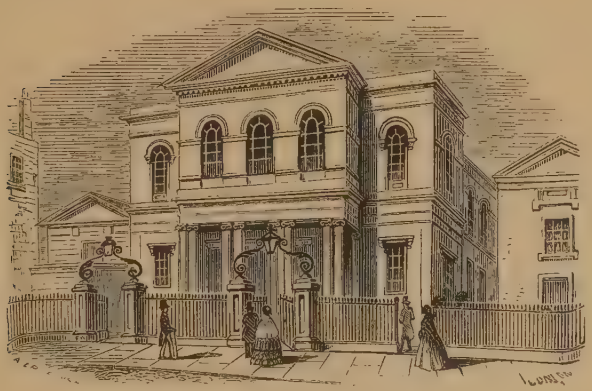
CHAPTER VIII.

MR. SPURGEON'S CALL TO LONDON.

AT Cambridge there is a very efficient Sunday School Union, and at its anniversary in 1853 Mr. Spurgeon was called upon to speak. This simple, and, as it were, casual incident, was an important link in a chain of events which led to great results. There was a gentleman present, worthy old Mr. Gould, a deacon of the Baptist Church at Loughton, Essex, who felt there was something unusual in the youthful speaker; and what he heard of his preaching at Waterbeach, and elsewhere, deepened and confirmed the impressions made.

Shortly after this, Mr. Gould met, in London, his friend, Mr. Thomas Olney, one of the deacons of the church meeting in New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, who bemoaned the low estate of that church, which had been one of the largest, richest, and most influential of all the London Baptist churches. Mr. Gould spoke of the youthful Cambridgeshire preacher, and suggested that he might be the means of reviving the decayed interest at New

Park Street. The two friends separated, Mr. Olney not being deeply impressed in favor of his friend's suggestion. Meanwhile things grew worse and worse at New Park Street. The chapel was badly placed, and the neighborhood was fast deteriorating, or being changed into a place for warehouses rather than dwelling-houses.



NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL.

After a time the two deacons met again, and Mr. Gould renewed his suggestion respecting the young Waterbeach pastor, and this time made a deeper impression on good Thomas Olney. There might be a gleam of hope for the cause in the suggestions made. Thomas Olney mentioned the matter to his fellow-deacon, James Low, and they consulted with their brethren in office, as the result of which a correspondence was opened between Mr. Low and the

Waterbeach pastor, which led to the latter receiving an invitation to preach on a certain Sunday in the large but almost empty chapel. The pastorate had been vacant some three months or more, and things were gloomy in the extreme. As we hope to devote a short chapter to the history of this memorable church, we shall confine ourselves now to matters concerning Mr. Spurgeon's accession to the pastorate, and its wonderful results.

Mr. Spurgeon's first Sunday in London was in December, 1853. Everything wore the appearance of gloom; virtually, there was no hopeful inspiration, — a gloomy month, in a gloomy neighborhood, in a chapel seating twelve hundred, where hardly two hundred were assembled. The preacher stayed himself upon the Lord, and preached. His first text was well chosen, — a more suitable one could not have been selected; and it has had a wonderful illustration in the whole of his subsequent ministry. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James i. 17). He spoke with great freedom and boldness, as one who believed what he preached, and that he had a message from God. The result was that some were disappointed; others resolved to oppose, and did oppose; but a large majority desired to hear him again. The evening congregation showed that the morning sermon had fallen on at-

tentive and willing ears. The number of hearers was greatly increased, — partly from the youth's unusual style, and partly from the earnestness and faithfulness of the preacher.

It was on that first Sunday that he found a suitable companion and friend in Mr. Joseph Passmore, who has from that day been closely associated with him as a brother and fellow-soldier, an elder and a deacon, and as one of the firm which, from the beginning, has published his sermons and other works.

Mr. Spurgeon was invited to repeat his visit, which he did, on the first, third, and fifth Lord's-days in January, 1854; but before the last of these Sabbaths he had received an invitation, dated 25th January, to occupy the pulpit for six months on probation. Mr. Spurgeon's reply to this invitation is characteristic of the man, though, at the time, he wanted some months of twenty years of age. It was worthy of a man of long experience, and displayed alike that distrust in self, that plain common-sense and sagacity, and that simple faith in the Lord's leading and guidance, which have marked his entire course.

No. 60 Park Street, Cambridge,
January 27th, 1854.

To James Low, Esq.:

My dear Sir, — I cannot help feeling intense gratification at the unanimity of the church at New Park Street in relation to their invitation to me. Had I been uncomfortable in my present situation I should have felt unmixed pleasure at the prospect Providence seems to open up before me; but, having a devoted and loving people, I feel I know not how.

One thing I know, namely, that I must soon be severed from them by necessity, for they do not raise sufficient to maintain me in comfort. Had they done so I should have turned a deaf ear to any request to leave them, at least for the present. But now my heavenly Father drives me forth from this little Garden of Eden, and while I see that I must go out, I leave it with reluctance, and tremble to tread the unknown land before me.

When I first ventured to preach at Waterbeach I only accepted an invitation for three months, on the condition that if in that time I should see good reason for leaving, or they, on their part, should wish for it, I should be at liberty to cease supplying, or they should have the same power to request me to do so, before the expiration of the time.

With regard to a six months' invitation from you, I have no objection to the length of time, but rather approve of the prudence of the church in wishing to have one so young as myself on an extended period of approbation. But I write after well weighing the matter when I say positively that I cannot, I *dare* not, accept an unqualified invitation for so long a time. My objection is not to the length of time of probation, but it ill becomes a youth to promise to preach to a London congregation so long, until he knows them and they know him. I would engage to supply for three months of that time, and then, should the congregation fail, or the church disagree, I would reserve to myself liberty, without breach of engagement, to retire; and you would, on your part, have the right to dismiss me without seeming to treat me ill. Should I see no reason for so doing, and the church still retain their wish for me, I can remain the other three months, either with or without the formality of a further invitation; but even during the second three months, I should not like to regard myself as a fixture, in case of ill success, but would only be a supply, liable to a fortnight's dismissal or resignation.

Perhaps this is not business-like — I do not know; but this is the course I should prefer, if it would be agreeable to the church. Enthusiasm and popularity are often like the crackling of thorns, and soon expire. I do not wish to be a hindrance, if I cannot be a help.

With regard to coming at once, I think I must not. My own deacons just hint that I ought to finish the quarter here, though by "ought" they simply mean, Pray do so if you can. This would be too long a delay. I wish to help them until they can get supplies, which is only to be done with great difficulty, and as I have given you four Sabbaths, I hope you will allow me to give them four in return. I would give them the first and second Sabbaths in February, and two more in a month or six weeks' time. I owe them much for their kindness, although they insist that the debt lies on their side. Some of them hope, and almost pray, that you may be tired of me in three months, so that I may be again sent back to them.

Thus, my dear sir, I have honestly poured out my heart to you. You are too kind. You will excuse me if I err, for I wish to do right to you, to my people, and to all, as being not mine own, but bought with a price.

I respect the honesty and boldness of the small minority, and only wonder that the number was not greater. I pray God that if He does not see fit that I should remain with you, the majority may be quite as much the other way at the end of six months, so that I may never divide you into parties.

Pecuniary matters I am well satisfied with. And now one thing is due to every minister, and I pray you to remind the church of it, — namely, that in private, as well as in public, they must all wrestle in prayer to God that I may be sustained in the great work.

I am, with best wishes for your health, and the greatest respect,

Yours truly,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Looking back to the earliest year of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry at New Park Street, we well remember what charges of audacity, impudence, overweening conceit, self-assertion, and such like things, — improper enough in any man, but especially in a young man, — were

brought against him, and hurled at him, like clods and stones, instead of rotten eggs and gutter garbage. This was done, not alone by newspaper writers, but by professing Christians, and even ministers. So they misunderstood his boldness and faithfulness in preaching the gospel. But what trace is there in the letter we have just quoted of anything of the kind? No young man, however small his gifts, and however limited his resources as a preacher, could have written more humbly, and with more of healthy self-distrust, and at the same time with greater frankness and straightforward honesty. The cautious letter was well received, and the honesty of the writer was well rewarded. Unexpected results followed his second visit. The spacious chapel, notwithstanding many drawbacks, and, not least, its bad situation, and the fact that the nearest way to it from the city was over Southwark Bridge, which involved a toll, was rapidly filling, the prayer-meetings were full of power, and conversion work was going on. There was a strong feeling at once to take steps to secure his election to the pastorate. Accordingly, a requisition for a special church-meeting was signed by fifty of the male members, and sent in to the deacons on 12th April. A meeting was held a week later, when the following resolution was passed unanimously: —

"That we tender our brother, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, a most cordial and affectionate invitation forthwith, to become pastor of this church, and we pray that

the result of his services may be owned of God, with an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, and a revival of religion in our midst; that it may be fruitful in the conversion of sinners, and in the edification of those that believe."

To this invitation there could be but one reply: the hand of the Lord and the will of the Lord were so manifest that they could not be mistaken. Accordingly, Mr. Spurgeon wrote: —

75 Dover Road, Borough,
April 28th, 1854.

To the Baptist Church of Christ worshipping in New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

Dearly beloved in Christ Jesus, — I have received your unanimous invitation, as contained in a resolution passed by you on the 19th inst., desiring me to accept the pastorate among you. No lengthened reply is required; there is but one answer to so loving and cordial an invitation. I accept it. I have not been perplexed as to what my reply shall be, for many things constrain me thus to answer.

I sought not to come to you, for I was the minister of an obscure but affectionate people; I never solicited advancement. The first note of invitation from your deacons came to me quite unlooked-for, and I trembled at the idea of preaching in London. I could not understand how it came about, and even now I am filled with astonishment at the wondrous Providence. I would wish to give myself into the hands of our covenant God, whose wisdom directs all things. He shall choose for me; and so far as I can judge, this is His choice.

I feel it to be a high honor to be the pastor of a people who can mention glorious names as my predecessors, and I entreat of you to remember me in prayer, that I may realize the solemn responsibility of my trust. Remember my youth and inexperience; pray that these may not hinder my usefulness.

I trust also that the remembrance of these may lead you to forgive the mistakes I may make, or unguarded words I may utter.

Blessed be the name of the Most High! if He has called me to this office He will support me in it; otherwise how should a child — a youth — have the presumption thus to attempt a work which filled the heart and hands of Jesus? Your kindness to me has been very great, and my heart is knit unto you. I fear not your steadfastness, I fear my own. The gospel, I believe, enables me to venture great things, and by faith I venture this. I ask your co-operation in every good work; in visiting the sick, in bringing in inquirers, and in mutual edification.

Oh that I may be no injury to you, but a lasting benefit! I have no more to say, only this, that if I have expressed myself in these few words in a manner unbecoming my youth and inexperience, you will not impute it to arrogance, but forgive my mistake.

And now, commending you to our covenant-keeping God, the Triune Jehovah,

I am,

Yours to serve in the Gospel,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Before he was twenty years of age this young man was therefore installed as pastor of a church some of whose previous pastors had been among the most learned, useful, and honored of their day.

At this point it seems necessary to give a short sketch of the earlier history of the church which now worships at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, with brief notes of some of its distinguished pastors.

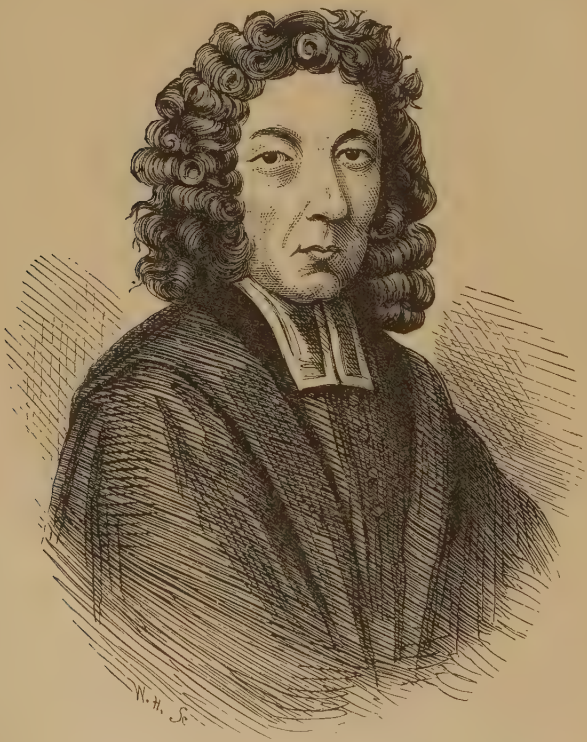
CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

IN the earlier part of the seventeenth century there were several Baptist societies meeting in private houses in the borough of Southwark. From one of these this church took its rise, having for its first pastor, Mr. WILLIAM RIDER, who settled in 1652, and continued with the people, in all probability, until his death; for at the settlement of the next pastor Mr. Rider had been dead some time. The church was small in numbers, but had the reputation of being composed of men of solid judgment, deep knowledge, and religious stability, and some of them were in easy circumstances. The church, however, seems to have had no regular meeting-house, but the members assembled in private houses. This was in the time of the Commonwealth, and when the Presbyterians were in power, and little liberty was enjoyed by the Baptists.

The next pastor was BENJAMIN KEACH, who had previously exercised his ministry at Winslow, Bucks. He was born in 1640, baptized at fifteen, and began to preach at eighteen. In 1668, when he was twenty-

eight years of age, he became pastor of the church, then meeting at Horselydown (Horse-lie-down). The previous ten years had been years of bitter trial and



BENJAMIN KEACH.

persecution, under the rigorous laws of the perfidious Charles II., whose minions outdid the king in violence and tyranny. The little chapel where he ministered

at Winslow still stands, and when the writer last visited the place was occupied by a few of the straitest of all Baptists. A good chapel was built there under Mr. Spurgeon's auspices in 1864.

Mr. Keach had published a small book, — "The

BENJAMIN KEACH IN THE PILLORY.

Child's Instructor; or a New and Easy Primer." The infamous judge, executing equally infamous laws, condemned him to prison for a fortnight, to stand in the pillory in the market-place at Aylesbury, with a paper on his head, "For writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book," etc. In addition to which he was

to pay a fine of £20 (equal to £100 now), find two sureties for his appearance at the next assize, recant his doctrines, and have the book burned by the hangman before his eyes. The following Saturday he stood in the pillory at Winslow. When in the pillory the crowd treated him with respect, and instead of hooting him and pelting him with mud and rotten eggs, as was commonly done, they listened attentively to his exhortations. The sheriff was enraged, and threatened to gag him, but he continued to exhort the people out of the Bible.

For four years after these events Mr. Keach continued in the country, preaching as he had opportunity, both publicly and privately, and harassed by his persecutors continually. Hoping to have more freedom in London, and withal better opportunities for his work, he turned his effects into money, and made his way with his devoted wife and children to the metropolis. On the journey the coach was beset by highwaymen, who compelled all the passengers to turn out, and then took from them all they could find of any value. Thus Mr. Keach arrived in London without money, and almost without friends. But he was known by name and reputation to some of the leading Baptists, and his needs were supplied. In conjunction with the other passengers he sued the county, and recovered in due time all he had lost.

Very shortly, it would appear, he became pastor of the late Mr. Rider's congregation, which still met in

private houses, the appointed place from time to time being a secret the members were compelled to keep sacred. He commenced his pastorate in 1668, and continued in the same for thirty-six years, dying in 1704. He was the author of many works, including his "Key to open Scripture Metaphors," and his book "On the Parables," which have been republished in our own day at half a guinea each. Some of his works are controversial, but he had the reputation of being fair and candid in the treatment of his opponents, which was a rare virtue in those days of bigotry and sectarianism, when religious liberty, however plainly taught by Milton and some others, seldom guided the conduct of the leaders in either Church or State, and was little understood by some of the most learned ministers.

Mr. Keach's immediate successor was Mr. Benjamin Stinton, his son-in-law. He had great natural gifts, and much acquired learning, and filled his position with acceptance and success. He originated the Protestant Dissenters' Charity School in Horsely-down, and was one of the founders of the Particular Baptist Fund. He died suddenly in the forty-third year of his age, having been pastor fourteen years. When he was seized with death he said to his wife, "*I am going*," and laid himself down on the bed, and expired.

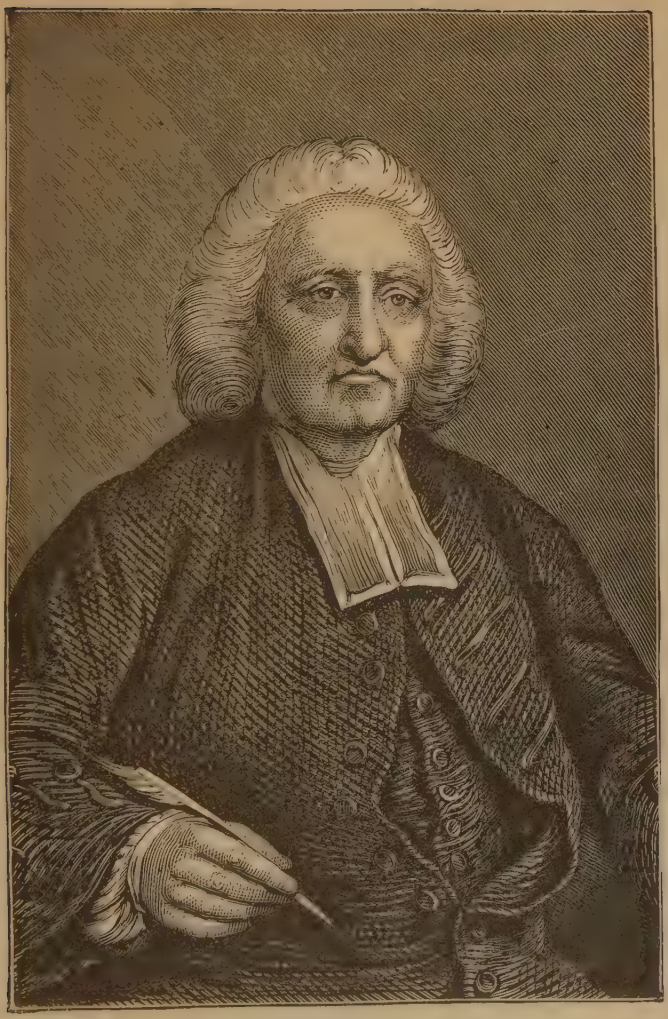
Then followed the great Dr. Gill. But his settlement caused a separation. Mr. Gill and his friends

withdrew to the schoolroom of Mr. Crosby (the historian of the Baptists), and afterwards, when the other party vacated the old chapel in Goat Yard for their new meeting-house in Unicorn Yard, Mr. Gill and his friends went back to their former home.

John Gill was born at Kettering, Northamptonshire, 23d November, 1697. His father was a member of a dissenting congregation in that town. He was baptized at nineteen, and was soon called to exercise his gifts as a preacher before the church. He was little more than twenty-one when the church at Horselydown invited him to preach with a view to the pastorate. He remained in this office fifty-one years, during which time he became a voluminous author, and a leading preacher in the denomination, in both town and country. Many anecdotes are told of him. He had to do with strange people sometimes, but he commonly managed to get the better of them, without harsh words or angry tones.

Judging of the good doctor from his portrait, he was ponderous in person and appearance: we know he was so in his teaching: and even when he tried to be humorous, there was commonly a crushing weight in his remarks.

A certain dame, it is said, called upon him one day, to find fault with the length of his white bands. "Well, well," said the doctor, "what do you think is the right length? Take them, and make them as long or as short as you like."



JOHN GILL.

The old lady was delighted; she was sure her dear pastor would grant her request, and so she had brought her scissors, and would trim them at once. Snip, snip, went the scissors, and the thing was done, and the bands returned.

"Well now, my good sister," said the doctor, "you must do me a good turn also."

"Yes, that I will, doctor. What can it be?"

"Well, you have something about you that is a great deal too long, and causes me no end of trouble, and I should like to see it shorter."

"Indeed, dear sir, I will not hesitate; what is it? Here are the scissors, use them as you please."

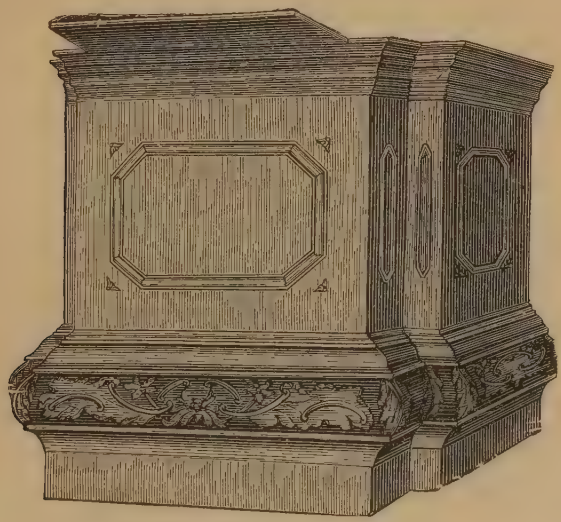
"Come, then, good sister," said the doctor, "*put out your tongue.*"

He was greatly beloved by his people, who bore lovingly with his refusal to have an assistant. He lived, notwithstanding his polemical writings, a calm and quiet life, and died resting in the Lord. To a dear relative, the Rev. John Gill, of St. Albans, he expressed his confidence and hope in these words: "I depend wholly and alone upon the free, sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love of God, the firm and everlasting covenant of grace, and my interest in the three Persons of the Trinity, for my whole salvation; and not upon any righteousness of my own, nor upon anything done in me, or done by me, under the influences of the Holy Spirit." To one he said: "I have nothing to make me uneasy," and then

repeated the following lines from Dr. Watts, in honor of the adored Redeemer: —

> "He raised me from the depths of sin,
> The gates of gaping hell;
> And fix'd my standing more secure
> Than 't was before I fell."

His last audible words were: "O my Father, my Father!" He died at Camberwell, October 14th, 1771.

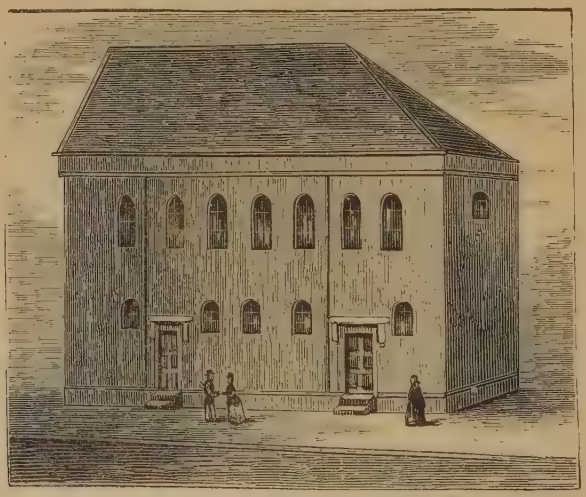


DR. GILL'S PULPIT.

Before the new College was built, Dr. Gill's pulpit was used by the young men in the Pastors' College when preaching before their fellow-students.

The mighty commentator having gone to his rest,

the church had to look round for a successor. They were guided to a young man from Bristol Academy, JOHN RIPPON, a son of a Devonshire pastor. He was only twenty years of age, and of vivacious manners. After the rather ponderous character of Dr. Gill's ministry, some forty of the members could not accept the change, Mr. Rippon being so young. They withdrew, and chose Mr. Bulton, who, oddly enough, was a year younger. Instead of resenting this secession, Mr. Rippon expressed his wonder



CARTER LANE CHAPEL.

that so many had united in his favor, and proposed that the secession should be helped to build a meeting-house; which was done, £300 being raised for that purpose. For fifty years he enjoyed great

prosperity, the church rising again to be the first in the denomination in London. In Dr. Gill's time the church had built Carter Lane Chapel, one of the

JOHN RIPPON, IN HIS EARLY DAYS.

most unsightly religious edifices of the day. This was removed in Dr. Rippon's time by the need of approaches to New London Bridge, and New Park

Street Chapel was erected in about as bad a situation as could possibly have been chosen.

Dr. Rippon was an author, though far behind Keach and Gill. His "Selection of Hymns" proved a good property, as it was the first compilation of the time for Baptist congregations. It was used all over England, and in many parts of America. The accompanying tune-book also held its own for many years. By means of his "Baptist Register" he sought to unite and develop the resources of the denomination wherever Baptists existed. The fourteen volumes of the "Register," from 1790 to 1803, are a source of information for which we might look in vain elsewhere.

Mr. Spurgeon says of Dr. Rippon, that "he was rather clever than profound; his talents were far inferior to those of Gill, but he had more tact, and so turned his gifts to the greatest possible account. He said many smart and witty things, and his preaching was always lively, affectionate, and impressive. He was popular in the best sense of the term, beloved at home, respected abroad, and useful everywhere. Many souls were won to Jesus by his teaching, and out of these a remarkable number became themselves ministers of the gospel. The church-book abounds with records of brethren preaching before the church, as the custom was in those days."

A noble testimony this concerning any man. Of the preachers coming out of the church, the writer

can bear testimony to the usefulness of one, Rev. John Giles, of Eythorne, who was wonderfully successful in that very interesting sphere.

For sixty-three years Dr. Rippon sustained the pastorate, beloved in life, honored in death, and gratefully remembered by thousands. His pastorate ended in 1836.

His successor, the following year, was another young man, JOSEPH ANGUS, now Professor Angus, D. D., of Regent's Park College. He was ordained 27th December, 1837, and as his invitation was entirely unanimous, so his pastorate was peaceful, happy, and prosperous. The action of the Baptist Missionary Society, in offering Mr. Angus the Secretaryship of the Society, was a severe blow to the church at New Park Street, and so, in about two years, they had again to seek a pastor.

Dr. Angus has a wide and worthy reputation as a scholar, an author, a professor of theology, and, not least, as one of the Committee who revised the Scriptures in 1881.

The choice of the church now fell upon JAMES SMITH. He had built up a large church and congregation at Cheltenham, and there was good reason to expect similar blessing in London.

Mr. Smith was not a scholar, had received no advantages in the way of education, and was neither profound nor clever. He was, however, well taught in the school of Christ, had a deep insight

into human nature, a good command of language, and was alike sound in the faith, a constant student of the Word, and full of love to souls. He labored with varying success for eight years, and then returned to Cheltenham. He, too, was an author. A number of his small devotional books have had a very wide sale, and have been greatly used of God, as have also his tracts and magazine articles.

William Walters was the next pastor. He, too, was a young man. His style was not generally acceptable to those who had been trained under Mr. Smith. After two years Mr. Walters removed to Halifax, and afterwards did a good work in Birmingham. He was a faithful man, a beloved brother, and a worthy friend. He died, after much affliction, when not much past middle life. His few publications, like himself and his preaching, sound, thoughtful, and instructive, have done good, but have not retained much hold on public attention.

It will be seen that most of the pastors of this church have been men of mark, men who made for themselves a place and a name. Several of them began their pastorate in their youth; they were mostly authors, and more or less popular. Mighty men of valor some especially were, but the old, old proverb has been found true, in part at least, for "the last shall be first." Of the present pastor we may say, "Many have done worthily, but he has excelled them all."

CHAPTER X.

EARLY YEARS OF MR. SPURGEON'S PASTORATE.

THREE months of his ministry at New Park Street had not passed before Mr. Spurgeon was really popular, crowds flocking to the chapel at every service, while the newspapers week by week were inquiring who and what this young preacher was, and whence he came. "Who is Spurgeon?" was their oft-repeated inquiry. There was no mistake about his popularity, and it increased from Sunday to Sunday; and, what is more, the power of the Lord was present to heal the spiritually sick, and to convert some of the worst of transgressors. From the first the writer rejoiced in the advent of such a man; but there were not a few, older men mostly, who shook their heads, and said it would be "only a nine days' wonder." We remember one venerable minister, a devout and godly man, but hampered in some of his views, who, when he was asked his opinion about the young preacher, replied that the people had itching ears, and Spurgeon had come to scratch them. Others expressed themselves with

even less brotherly or Christian feeling. They were jealous of him, and predicted his speedy downfall.

This was the case chiefly with such good men as admired the doctrines of grace, which the young preacher undoubtedly and fearlessly proclaimed, but objected to his fervent and repeated appeals to sinners to "repent, and believe the gospel," to look to Christ, and live. But this was not the case with all who held those truths. Quite recently the writer met with an elderly Christian man who had been a member of the church at The Grove, Camberwell, under the ministry of the Rev. Joseph Irons. Mr. Irons had gone home, and his successor was not satisfactory to all Mr. Irons's people. One evening a minister of the strict Baptist order called upon my friend, who lived in Walworth. It was Thursday, and the minister was going to hear the young preacher at New Park Street, and wished his friend to accompany him. "No," said he, "I have had enough of *boy preachers*." Still the minister urged him; and finally, for his sake, that he might not seem unkind and wanting in courtesy, he consented and went. The hymn, the exposition, the prayer, but, more than all, the sermon, so laid hold on his heart that he took sittings in the chapel, and continued in the congregation all the time he remained in London. The young preacher handled old truths in a new and certainly very striking manner, and people could not help being arrested, whether they

Yours very truly
C. H. Bunsen

received the doctrine or not. The following description of the preacher's style at this time is supposed to have been written by Mr. Hare: —

"His voice is clear and musical; his language plain; his style flowing, but terse; his method lucid and orderly; his matter sound and suitable; his tone and spirit cordial; his remarks always pithy and pungent, sometimes familiar and colloquial, yet never light or coarse, much less profane. Judging from a single sermon, we supposed that he would become a plain, faithful, forcible, and affectionate preacher of the gospel in the form called Calvinistic; and our judgment was the more favorable because, while there is a solidity beyond his years, we detected little of the wild luxuriance naturally characteristic of very young preachers."

Want of order and arrangement is a fault of most young preachers; if it ever applied to Mr. Spurgeon, he very soon corrected it. "Once," says he, "I put all my knowledge together in glorious confusion, but now I have a shelf in my head for everything; and whatever I read or hear, I know where to stow it away for use at the proper time."

In "The Treasury of David," Mr. Spurgeon relates the following anecdote, which belongs, chronologically, to the period we are describing: —

"In the year 1854, when I had scarcely been in London twelve months, the neighborhood in which I labored was visited by Asiatic cholera, and my

congregation suffered from its inroads. Family after family summoned me to the bedside of the smitten, and almost every day I was called to visit the grave. I gave myself up with youthful ardor to the visitation of the sick, and was sent for from all corners of the district by persons of all ranks and religions. I became weary in body and sick at heart. My friends seemed falling one by one, and I felt, or fancied, that I was sickening like those around me. A little more work and weeping would have laid me low among the rest. I felt that my burden was heavier than I could bear, and I was ready to sink under it. As God would have it, I was returning mournfully home from a funeral, when my curiosity led me to read a paper which was wafered up in a shoemaker's window in the Dover Road. It did not look like a trade announcement, nor was it, for it bore, in a good, bold hand, these words: 'Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my Refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.' The effect on my heart was immediate. Faith appropriated the passage as her own. I felt secured, refreshed, girt with immortality. I went on with my visitations of the dying in a calm and peaceful spirit; I felt no fear of evil, and I suffered no harm. The providence which moved the tradesman to place those verses in his window I gratefully acknowledge, and, in the remembrance

of its marvellous power, I adore the Lord, my God."

Many of those who came to hear the young preacher, gave to the public their ideas of the man and his work. Some of these were not worth the paper they were printed on, but others were judicious and free from prejudice. Such an article was one that appeared in "The Friend," written by a member of the Society of Friends. He says: "The crowds which have been drawn to hear him, the interest excited by his ministry, and the conflicting opinions expressed in reference to his qualifications and usefulness, have been altogether without parallel in modern times. It was a remarkable sight to see this round-faced country youth thus placed in a position of such solemn and arduous responsibility, yet addressing himself to the fulfilment of its onerous duties with a gravity, self-possession, and vigor that proved him well fitted to the task he had assumed. In a few weeks the empty pews were crowded; every sitting in the chapel was let; and ere twelve months had elapsed the eagerness to hear him had become so great that every standing-place within the walls was occupied on each Sabbath, and it soon became evident that increased accommodation must be provided."

One evening the preacher exclaimed, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, and by faith this wall at the back shall come down too!" An aged dea-

con, who had more prudence than faith, said to the preacher after the sermon, "Let us never hear of that again." "What do you mean?" replied Mr. Spurgeon; "you will hear no more about it *when it is done!*" A meeting was held to consider the matter, a fund was opened, and in no great length of time the vestries and schools were thrown into the chapel, and a new school-room was built on one side, with sliding windows, so that those who were seated there could hear the preacher. During these alterations, namely, from 11th February to 27th May, 1855, the congregation met in Exeter Hall. The large upper hall was crammed, and paragraphs appeared in the daily papers stating that the Strand was blocked up on Sundays by crowds who gathered to hear the young preacher. It was common to jeer at him, and to endeavor to pour contempt on the man and his preaching. Numerous caricatures appeared, some of them far from complimentary. If the object of these was to damage him and his work, they signally failed. The multitude that thronged to hear him was thereby greatly increased, and numbers were brought to repentance and faith.

Two of these caricatures may be briefly referred to. In one, named "Brimstone and Treacle," was a rather grotesque representation of the young preacher in the full heat of his discourse, and on his left was a "very proper" preacher in full clerical costume, with his sermon on his velvet cushion. The

"BRIMSTONE AND TREACLE."

latter was supposed to be a likeness of the late Mr. Bellew, the fashionable West End preacher.

The other caricature referred to was named "Catch-'em-alive-O!" The preacher appeared in the act of preaching, but with head-gear like that adopted by the men who sell fly-paper. People as with the wings of flies were represented as attracted to him, and sticking to his hat or buzzing around him in the act of being caught. Judges, lords, and ladies, as well as poor women and working-men, were all represented.

All this hue and cry only increased the congregation; pamphlets and letters in newspapers united to

"CATCH-'EM-ALIVE-O!"

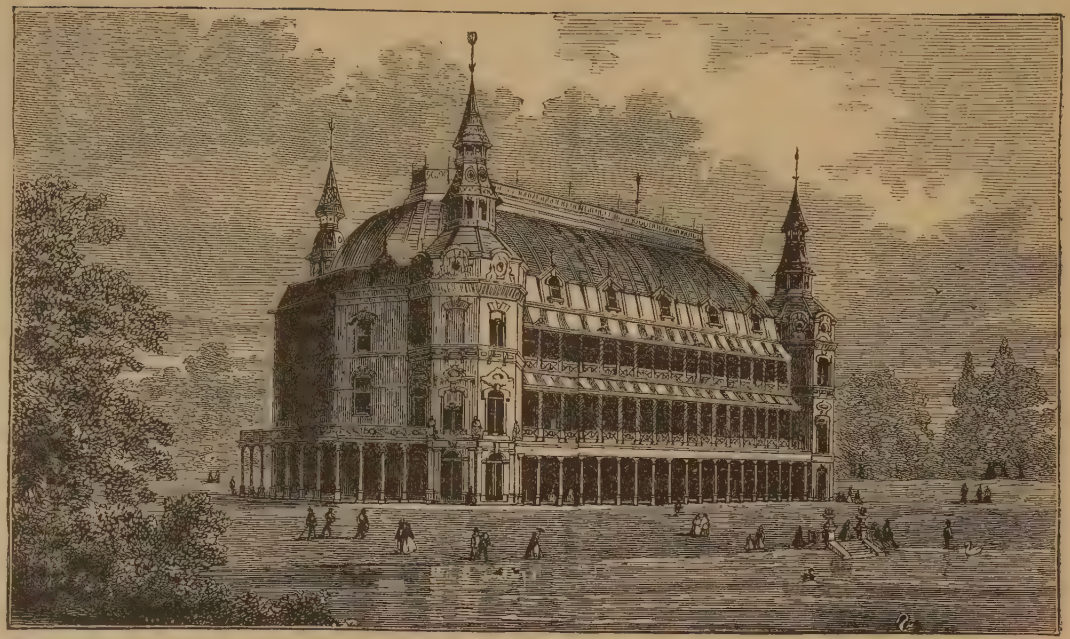
try to crush him, but really succeeded in making him more and more popular.

The year 1856 was a memorable one in Mr. Spurgeon's life. On January 8th he was married to Miss Susannah Thompson, daughter of Mr. Robert Thompson, of Falcon Square. The service was conducted at New Park Street Chapel by Dr. Alexander Fletcher. About two thousand persons were unable to enter, after the building was crowded.

In June, 1856, the chapel was used in the morning, and Exeter Hall in the evening. This was found to be inconvenient, and a fund was started to provide for the erection of a building sufficiently capacious to contain the ever-increasing crowds that flocked to the services.

As if to urge this movement, the proprietors of Exeter Hall intimated that they were unable to let their hall continuously to one congregation. Most opportunely, a large hall in the Royal Surrey Gardens was just completed for the monster concerts of M. Jullien, and, as Mr. Spurgeon says, "with some trembling at the magnitude of the enterprise, this hall was secured for Sabbath evenings."

At the first service in the music-hall, some evil-disposed persons, who, it is supposed, acted in concert, raised a cry of "Fire!" and created a disturbance just after the preacher had commenced his prayer. There were probably eight or nine thousand persons present, and many of them were seized with a sudden panic. This caused a rush to the doors, particularly from the galleries. Several persons, either in consequence of their heedless haste, or from the extreme pressure of the crowd behind, were thrown down on the stone steps of the northwest staircase, and were trampled on by the crowd pressing upon them. The lamentable result was that seven persons lost their lives, and twenty-eight were removed to the hospitals seriously bruised and injured.



MUSIC HALL, SURREY GARDENS.

There is an entry in the church-book, dated 19th October, 1856, as follows : —

" Our Pastor, not being aware that any loss of life had occurred, continued in the pulpit, endeavoring by every means in his power to alleviate the fears of the people ; and to a very considerable extent he was successful. In attempting to renew the service, it was found that the people were too excited to listen to him, so the service was closed. This lamentable circumstance produced very serious effects on the nervous system of our Pastor. He was entirely prostrated for some days, and compelled to relinquish his preaching engagements."

Twenty-five years afterwards, the writer witnessed the terribly depressing effect the memory of this sad event had on Mr. Spurgeon. During the session of the Baptist Union at Portsmouth and Southampton, in 1881, Mr. Spurgeon was announced to preach in the largest available room in the former town. Long before the service began every available seat and all standing-room were occupied, and still there were hundreds pressing forward, and endeavoring to crowd in. There was some confusion just as the preacher was passing on to the platform to take his seat. He seemed entirely unmanned, and stood in the passage leaning his head on his hand. He told the writer that the circumstance so vividly recalled the terrible scene at the Surrey Music Hall that he felt quite unable to preach. But he did preach, and

preach well, though he could not entirely recover from the agitation of his nervous system. Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, a cousin of Queen Victoria, who was then the military commander of the district, was present with his suite, and cordially greeted "the prince of preachers" after his sermon.

The church-record of Oct. 19th, 1856, continues: —

"Through the great mercy of our heavenly Father, our Pastor was restored so as to be able to occupy the pulpit in our own chapel on Sunday, October 31st, and gradually recovered his wonted health and vigor. The Lord's name be praised!

"The church desire to note this event in their minutes, and to record their devout thankfulness to God, that in this sad calamity, the lives of their beloved Pastor, the deacons, and members, were all preserved; and also with the hope that our heavenly Father from this seeming evil may produce the greatest amount of real good."

Beside all the pain and distress of this sad catastrophe, Mr. Spurgeon and his friends had to bear the wicked accusations of the public press.

The sufferers by the panic found sympathizing helpers in Mr. Spurgeon and his friends, although they were in no sense or degree responsible for what had happened.

To prevent any similar catastrophe, it was wisely arranged to hold the service in the Music Hall in the morning, though that was less favorable to large

congregations than the evening. Anyhow, the multitude came as before, and continued to come for three full years. All classes came, high and low; but that which gave Mr. Spurgeon the greatest joy was that hundreds were there led to seek the Lord, and find eternal life in Him.

About this time a remarkable letter appeared in "The Times" newspaper, dated from Broad Phylactery, Westminster, and signed *Habitans in Sicco*. It was known to be written by an eminent scholar, and it produced a very favorable impression, and was not without more abiding results. Part of the letter may be appropriately given here: —

"'I want to hear Spurgeon; let us go.' Now, I am supposed to be a High Churchman, so I answered, 'What! go and hear a Calvinist, a Baptist, — a man who ought to be ashamed of himself for being so near the Church, and yet not within its pale?' 'Never mind, come and hear him.' Well, we went yesterday morning to the Music Hall, in the Surrey Gardens.

"Fancy a congregation consisting of 10,000 persons streaming into the hall, mounting the galleries, humming, buzzing, and swarming, — a mighty hive of bees, — eager to secure, at first, the best places, and, at last, any place at all. After waiting more than half an hour, — for, if you wish to have a seat, you must be there at least that space of time in advance, — Mr. Spurgeon ascended his tribune. To the hum, and rush, and trampling of men succeeded a low concen-

INTERIOR OF MUSIC HALL, SURREY GARDENS.

trated thrill and murmur of devotion, which seemed to run at once, like an electric current, through the breast of every one present; and by this magnetic chain the preacher held us fast bound for about two hours. It is not my purpose to give a summary of his discourse. It is enough to say of his voice, that its power and volume are sufficient to reach every one in that vast assembly; of his language, that it is neither high-flown nor homely; of his style, that it is at times familiar, at times declamatory, but always happy, and often eloquent; of his doctrine, that neither the Calvinist nor the Baptist appears in the forefront of the battle, which is urged by Mr. Spurgeon with relentless animosity, and with gospel weapons, against irreligion, cant, hypocrisy, pride, and those secret bosom sins which so easily beset a man in daily life; and to sum up all in a word, it is enough to say of the man himself that he impresses you with a perfect conviction of his sincerity.

"But I have not written so much about my children's want of spiritual food when they listened to the mumbling of the Archbishop of ——, and my own banquet at the Surrey Gardens, without a desire to draw a practical conclusion from these two stories, and to point them by a moral. Here is a man not more Calvinistic than many an incumbent of the Established Church who 'humbles and mumbles,' as old Latimer says, over his liturgy and text, — here is a man who says that complete immersion, or something

of the kind, of adults, is necessary to baptism. These are his faults of doctrine; but if I were the examining chaplain of the Archbishop of ——, I would say, 'May it please your grace, here is a man able to preach eloquently, able to fill the largest church in England with his voice, and what is more to the purpose, with people. And may it please your grace, here are two churches in the metropolis, St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. What does your grace think of inviting Mr. Spurgeon, this heretical Calvinist and Baptist, who is able to draw 10,000 souls after him, just to try his voice some Sunday morning, in the nave of either of those churches?'"

The 7th of October, 1857, was appointed as a day of national humiliation on account of the Indian mutiny. Mr. Spurgeon preached in the centre transept of the Crystal Palace to more than twenty-three thousand people, making a collection, which amounted to £686, for the National Fund.

In the celebrated "Greville Memoirs" is the following record concerning the pastor of the Tabernacle Church: "8th February, 1857. I have just come from hearing the celebrated Mr. Spurgeon preach in the Music Hall of the Surrey Gardens. It was quite full. He told us from the pulpit that there were 9,000 persons present. The service was like the Presbyterian, — psalms, prayer, expounding a psalm, and a sermon. He is certainly very remarkable, and undeniably a fine character, — not remarkable in person;

in face resembling a smaller Macaulay; a very clear and powerful voice, which was heard through the hall; a manner natural, impassioned, and without affectation or extravagance; wonderful fluency and command of language, abounding in illustration, and very often of a very familiar kind, but without anything ridiculous or irreverent. He gave me an impression of his earnestness and sincerity; speaking without book or notes, yet his discourse was evidently very carefully prepared. The text was, 'Cleanse thou me from secret faults,' and he divided it into heads, — the misery, the folly, the danger (and a fourth, which I have forgotten), of secret sins, in all of which he was very eloquent and impressive. He preached for about three-quarters of an hour, and, to judge by the use of the handkerchiefs and the audible sobs, with great effect."

While Mr. Spurgeon continued his services in the Music Hall, many persons, especially among the nobility, who probably would not have entered a chapel for public worship, attended his ministry. As noble as any of them was a man who sprang from the people, and who had won honors far beyond coronets as a pioneer missionary and discoverer, — Dr. Livingstone. On the occasion of one of his visits a scene of almost unequalled beauty and pathos was witnessed. On the platform, near the pulpit, was sitting the Rev. Dr. Armitage of New York, who had been introduced to Mr. Spurgeon the previous day. Nearer the pulpit

sat the apostolic Dr. Livingstone. The sermon that morning was one of great power, full of earnest appeals and heart-searching utterances, such as had produced tears in hundreds of eyes during its delivery. Immediately the sermon was over, Dr. Livingstone's presence was announced to Mr. Spurgeon. As Dr. Livingstone approached, Dr. Armitage came forward to offer his congratulations, and to shake the hand of the preacher. Mr. Spurgeon withdrew his own hand, remarking pleasantly to the American divine, "No, shake hands first with Dr. Livingstone; he is the worthier man." The congratulations of the African explorer and the New York pastor were given with manifest sincerity, Mr. Spurgeon receiving them with that simple, unaffected modesty which is so characteristic of the man. During the brief conversation which followed, Dr. Livingstone remarked that no religious service he ever remembered had so deeply impressed his own mind as that he had witnessed and participated in that morning. He added that, when he had retired again into the solitudes of Africa, no scene he had ever witnessed would afford him more consolation than the recollection of the man God had raised up, who could so effectively and impressively preach to congregated thousands, while he should have to content himself by preaching to units, or, at most, tens under a tropical sky in Africa.

Dr. Armitage had come over to England to invite

Mr. Spurgeon to go to America to deliver a series of lectures, for which a very large sum of money would be given; but the invitation was not accepted.

During one of his well-earned vacations Mr. Spurgeon visited Holland, and preached before the Dutch Court, and had a lengthened interview with the Queen. On another occasion he visited Geneva, where he preached for Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, and also in the Cathedral where John Calvin aforetime proclaimed similar truths.

In December, 1859, Mr. Spurgeon and his friends left the Surrey Music Hall. The circumstances under which they made this move are worthy of note, and may be regarded in the light of a protest against the secularization of the Lord's-day. "We paid the company," says Mr. Spurgeon, "a large sum for our morning service, and this was the only amount out of which a dividend was paid. They proposed to open the gardens for amusement on the Lord's-Day evening, and we threatened to give up our tenancy if they did so. This prevented the evil for some time, but at length the baser sort prevailed, and under the notion that Sunday 'pleasure' would prove remunerative, they advertised that the gardens would be opened on the Sabbath; we therefore felt bound in honor to leave the place, and we did so. After a while a fire almost destroyed the building, and the relics were for years turned into a hospital."

On the 18th December, 1859, Mr. Spurgeon and his

people occupied Exeter Hall for the third time. Some of his remarks upon leaving that building to occupy the new Tabernacle, 1st March, 1861, though following in time events we have yet to narrate, may appropriately find a place here: —

"In the providence of God we, as a church and people, have had to wander often. This is our third sojourn within these walls. It is now about to close. We have had at all times and seasons a compulsion for moving; sometimes a compulsion of conscience, at other times a compulsion of pleasure, as on this occasion. I am sure that when we first went to the Surrey Music Hall God went with us. Satan went too, but he fled before us. That frightful calamity, the impression of which can never be erased from my mind, turned out, in the providence of God, to be one of the most wonderful means of turning public attention to special services, and I do not doubt that — fearful catastrophe though it was — it has been the mother of multitudes of blessings. The Christian world noted the example, and saw its after-success; they followed it; and to this day, in the theatre and in the cathedral, the Word of Christ is preached where it never was preached before. In each of our movings we have had reason to see the hand of God, and here particularly; for many residents in the West End, who probably might not have taken a journey beyond the river, have in this place come to listen to the Word. Here God's grace has broken hard

hearts; here have souls been renewed, and wanderers reclaimed. Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name."

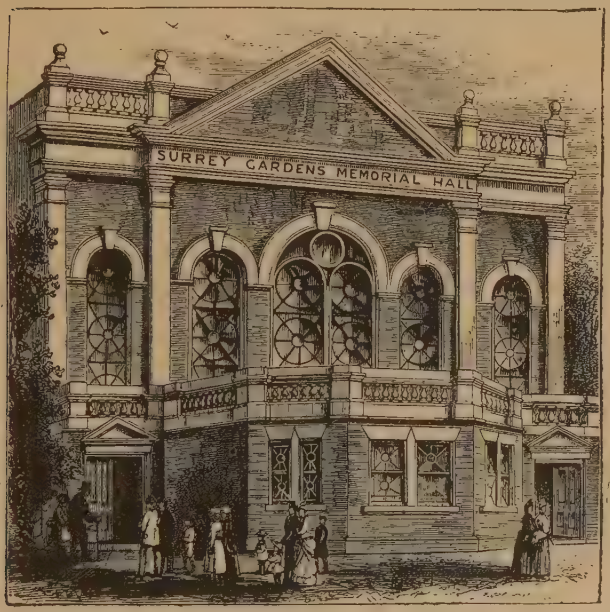
We may appropriately close this chapter by a brief reference to

THE SURREY GARDENS MEMORIAL HALL.

This was erected in 1891, in Penrose Street, Walworth, close to the site of the Surrey Gardens, at the cost of £3,000, as a home for one of the many branch schools and missions connected with the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and especially to commemorate the gracious work of God, in saving many hundreds of souls by the preaching of the gospel in the Music Hall.

In "The Sword and the Trowel" for October, 1890, Mr. Spurgeon, in explaining the project for the erection of the Memorial Hall, wrote: "All classes heard the Word in the great Hall, — from the Prime Minister downwards. At no time have so many of the aristocracy made acquaintance with Nonconformist worship. As for the multitude, they were always there in force; and these, not only from the religious section of society, but largely from those who never went to public worship. The reading of newspapers before the commencement of service, though in itself objectionable enough, was the proof that those were present for whom the services

were designed. The additions to the church were very numerous, and they were mainly from that stratum of society which is not touched by ordinary religious services. Though the Hall is so swept away that not a wreck remains, it will never cease to hold



a place in the memory of those to whom it was their spiritual birthplace, and they are very many."

The project was heartily received. The pastor and deacons, as in all Tabernacle schemes, generally led the way with liberal donations; and many friends, who had been blessed in the Music Hall, sent their

contributions, from "the widow's mite" to the rich man's £100, until several pages of "The Sword and the Trowel" were required for the lists of donors to the Memorial Fund.

Mr. Higgs, one of Mr. Spurgeon's deacons, purchased a suitable site, and generously undertook to hand it over, with the completed building, for £3,000, a sum considerably less than it would have cost if put up to contract. The memorial stones were laid by Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. S. R. Pearce, superintendent of the Tabernacle and Carter Street Sunday-schools, and in due course the Memorial Hall was finished. It was to have been opened by Mr. Spurgeon on the 2d June, 1891, but his illness made it necessary to postpone the inaugural service until the 23d of the month; and his illness continuing, the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, his brother and co-pastor, preached in the afternoon; and a public meeting was held in the evening, presided over by Samuel Barrow, Esq., who was present at the Music Hall on the night of the catastrophe. The whole cost of the land and buildings had been previously subscribed, so that the teachers of the Carter Street Sunday-school took possession of their new premises free from debt.

CHAPTER XI.

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

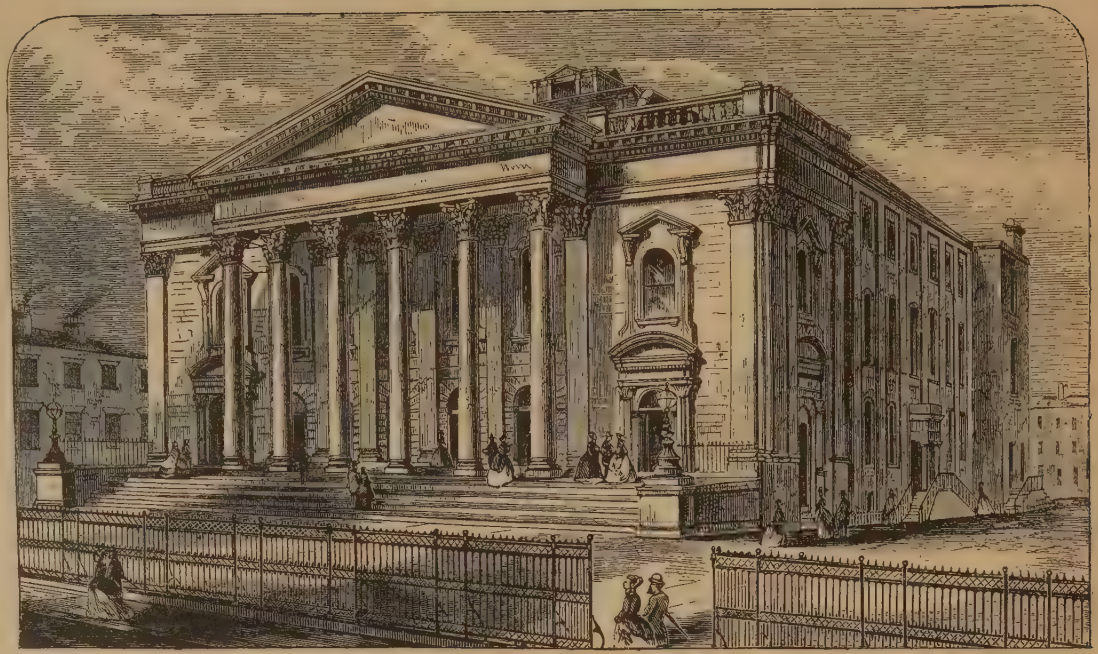
THE history of this building is a subject full of interest, and, if we had liberty and space to tell all the wonderful incidents in connection therewith, many startling facts would be revealed.

The first great meeting for considering steps to be taken to prepare a permanent home for the church and congregation was held in October, 1856. The proposal was very heartily taken up by Mr. Spurgeon's friends, and it found favor in many parts of the country; indeed, wherever he or his sermons went. Of course there were obstructionists, as there always are whenever any good and great work is projected. It was so in the time of Zerubbabel, when the second temple at Jerusalem was in course of erection. Some of these obstructionists laughed at the proposal to erect a place of worship to seat five thousand people. But the work went on, notwithstanding. By January, 1858, the amount in hand was £6,100, and within the next year it reached £9,639. £5,000 were set aside for the purchase of the site. "We went plodding on,"

says Mr. Spurgeon, "the pastor collecting personally, or by his sermons, very much of the money, travelling far and wide to do so." His plan was to divide the collections, half going to some local object, and half being added to his Tabernacle list. Sometimes he would make an exception to this rule, and give the whole of the collection to help the income of some needy pastor.

Mr. Spurgeon has always been well received in Scotland, and his Scottish friends came forward liberally to help his Tabernacle Fund. The first stone was laid, with great rejoicings, on the 16th August, 1859, by Sir Samuel Morton Peto. The site was then paid for, and certain instalments to the builder. In January, 1860, there was £16,868 in hand, more than half of the sum required.

Many remarkable interpositions of providence were witnessed in connection with the great enterprise. First, in reference to the ground, which belonged to the Fishmongers' Company. It was doubtful whether they could sell the land, and whether they would if they could. Happily, Mr. James Spicer and other friends were upon the Court of the Company, and so the land was secured. Then, in case the Company might not be legally free to sell the freehold, Mr. William Joynson, the enterprising paper-maker of St. Mary Cray, Kent, deposited sufficient money to pay for an Act of Parliament, authorizing the Company to sell. The kind hand of the Lord was also



THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

seen in disposing a gentleman of Bristol, who had never heard Mr. Spurgeon, to give £5,000 towards the building.

"Eternity alone can reveal," says Mr. Spurgeon, "all the generous feeling and self-denying liberality evinced by Christian people in connection with this enterprise, — to us, at any rate, so gigantic at the time that, apart from Divine aid, we could never have carried it through. One of the chief of our mercies was the fact that our beloved brother, William Higgs, was our builder, and treated us with unbounded liberality throughout the whole affair."

Funds came in more or less freely, but at the beginning of 1861 £4,000 was still needed, that the place might be opened free of debt.

"Take it to the Lord in prayer,"

has ever been the habit of the pastor and people of the Tabernacle in all cases of difficulties, trials, and necessities. And so it is written among the records of the church: —

"This church needs rather more than £4,000, to enable it to open the New Tabernacle free of all debt. It humbly asks this temporal mercy of God, and believes, that, for Jesus' sake, the prayer will be heard, and the boon bestowed." This was signed by Mr. Spurgeon and his principal helpers. The prayer was heard, and the boon bestowed, and the pastor and many friends signed the testimony that follows: —

"We, the undersigned members of the church lately worshipping in New Park Street Chapel, but now assembling in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, desire, with overflowing hearts, to make known and record the lovingkindness of our faithful God. We asked in faith, but our Lord has exceeded our desires; for not only was the whole sum given us, but far sooner than we had looked for it. Truly the Lord is good, and worthy to be praised. We are ashamed of ourselves that we ever doubted him; and we pray that, as a church, and as individuals, we may be enabled to trust in the Lord at all times with confidence, so that in quietness we may possess our souls. To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost we offer praise and thanksgiving, and we set to our seal that God is true."

It is a pleasing fact, and it is a pleasure to be able to record it, that, among the thousands of contributors to the Tabernacle Fund, there were many who belonged to other denominations, and not a few who were attached members of the Church of England.

The Tabernacle is a noble pile, not devoid of beauty, though utility has been the first consideration. For the gratification of those who live in distant parts of the country and of the world, and who have never visited it, and may never see it, we give a few particulars concerning its size, capabilities, and appointments.

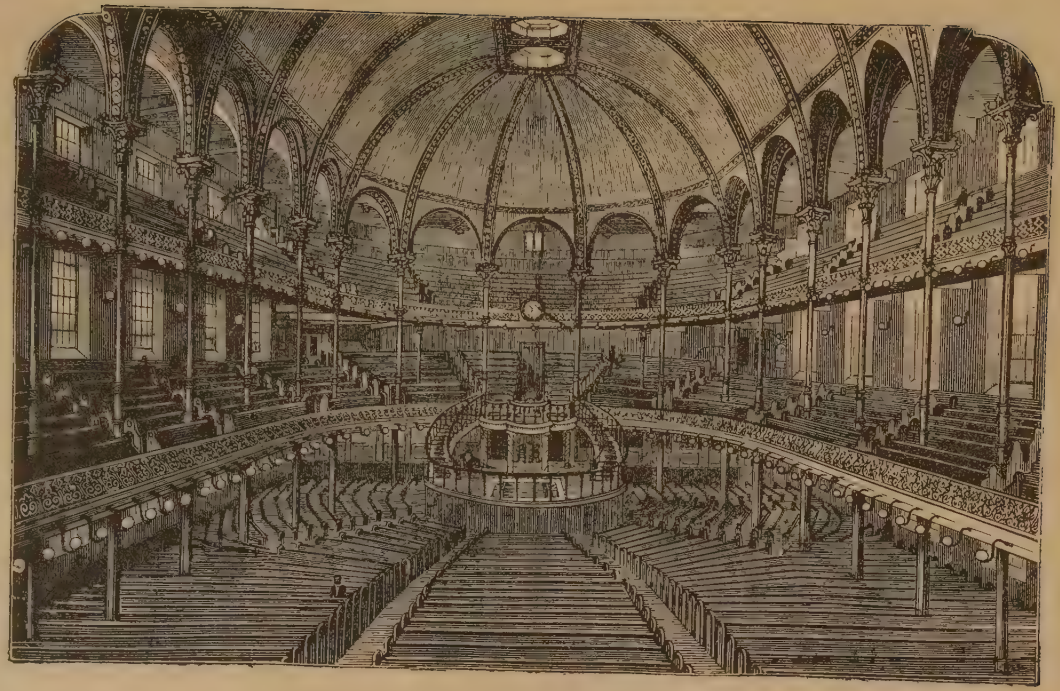
The building is one hundred and forty-six feet in

length, eighty-one feet in width, and sixty-two feet in height. There are five thousand five hundred sittings, and room for another five hundred at least, without crowding. Below is a lecture-hall, seating nearly a thousand, a school-room for a thousand children, with several class-rooms, &c. In addition, there are rooms for working meetings, Bible-classes, and secretary's office; with three vestries, for pastor, deacons, and elders. But with all these the accommodation is all too little for the work, and rooms in the College are constantly in use.

The opening services occupied about a month. A full account of the proceedings has been published, and may still be had of Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster. A brief outline, however, will not be out of place here.

The first service in the new Tabernacle was a prayer-meeting. It was held at 7 o'clock in the morning, on Monday, March 18th, 1861. More than a thousand people were present. Mr. Spurgeon presided, and first addressed the throne of grace, being followed by some of the elders, a student, E. Ball, Esq., M. P., and George Moore, a deacon. Fervent and intensely earnest were the prayers that God would come and fill the house with His glory, and the brethren separated with the firm conviction that God would be with them of a truth.

The first sermon in the Tabernacle was preached by Mr. Spurgeon, on Monday afternoon, 25th March, 1861, from the text (Acts v. 42): "And daily in the



INTERIOR OF METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

He said he was totally unable to preach. "And indeed," said he, "I think I shall scarcely attempt a sermon, but rather give a sort of declaration of the truths from which future sermons shall be made. I will give you bullion rather than coin: the block from the quarry, and not the statue from the chisel. It appears that the one subject upon which men preached in the apostolic age was Jesus Christ. The tendency of man, if left alone, is continually to go further and further from God; and the church of God itself is no exception to the general rule. For the first few years during and after the apostolic era, Christ Jesus was preached; but gradually the church departed from the central point, and began rather to preach ceremonials and church offices than the person of their Lord. So has it been in these modern times. We also have fallen into the same error, — at least, to a degree; and have gone from preaching Christ to preaching doctrines about Christ; inferences which may be drawn from His life, or definitions which may be gathered from His discourses. We are not content to stand like angels in the sun; our fancies disturb our rest, and must needs fly on the sunbeams further and further from the glorious source of light. In the days of Paul it was not difficult at once, in one word, to give the sum and substance of the current theology. It was Christ Jesus. . . .

"I would propose (and oh, may the Lord grant us grace to carry out that proposition, from which no Christian can dissent!), I would propose that the subject of the ministry of this house, as long as this platform shall stand, and as long as this house shall be frequented by worshippers, shall be the person of Jesus Christ. I am never ashamed to avow myself a Calvinist, although I claim to be a Calvinist after Calvin, rather than after the modern debased fashion. I do not hesitate to take the name of Baptist. You have there (pointing to the baptistery) substantial evidence that I am not ashamed of that ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ; but if I am asked to say what is my creed, I think I must reply, 'It is Jesus Christ.' My venerable predecessor, Dr. Gill, has left a body of divinity, admirable and excellent in its way; but the body of divinity to which I would pin and bind myself forever, God helping me, is not his system of divinity, or any other human treatise, but Christ Jesus, who is the sum and substance of the gospel, who is in Himself all theology, the incarnation of every precious truth, the all-glorious personal embodiment of the way, the truth, and the life."

In the evening of the same day the Rev. William Brock, D.D., preached from Philippians i. 18: "Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

Comparing the state of society in Paul's day, in reference to the gospel, with the present condition of

affairs,— the hearers and disciples being so much fewer then than now, — he remarked, with fine effect, in one of the opening paragraphs: —

"But how he would have rejoiced, or how he would rejoice, if he were living now! Why, for every one who preached the gospel in his time, there are thousands who are preaching it now; for every hundred hearers of that day, there are thousands upon thousands now: and for every place into which the citizens of Rome might go to hear about Christ and Him crucified, I need not say that there are many and ever-multiplying places now. And you, my brethren, — the pastor of this church and those connected with him, — you have added to the number, thank God, of those places; and we are to-night to celebrate the completion of one, I suppose, of the best places that has ever been reared for the honor and the glory of Christ. From the first day until now, from its foundation to its top-stone, you have begun, and continued, and ended, — your desire, your prayer, your purpose, your ambition, having been just simply this: that here the Redeemer's name may be magnified, that here His great salvation in all simplicity may be proclaimed. And we have come here to-night to assure you of our sympathy, to give to you the pledges of our brotherly affection, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to bid you heartily God-speed."

On Tuesday evening, 26th March, the first of the public meetings in connection with the opening of the Tabernacle took place, limited exclusively to the contributors to the building fund, of whom more than three thousand were present. Up to the moment when Sir Henry Havelock (now Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) took the chair, some half-dozen gentlemen were busy on the lower platform receiving and recording the various gifts from rich and poor, high and low, from pence to pounds; all seeming full of joy and gladness.

There were several well-known speakers that evening, of whom we believe, besides the chairman, Mr. Spurgeon is the only survivor. Jonathan George, Francis Tucker, Charles Stovel, and George Moore, have all passed away to their rest and home. Their words were well-timed and weighty; but there was a special appropriateness in the address of the Rev. Francis Tucker, B.A., and his words may well be repeated now, when, nearer home than at that time, the evils he deprecated are in some quarters tolerated, and their advocates hailed as brethren by men reputedly of sounder faith. Mr. Tucker said: "As to the beauty of the building, no words he could use would adequately describe it. I do from my heart congratulate you on the size and beauty of the edifice. But I have also to congratulate you upon another matter,—upon the doctrines that would be preached in that grand building. He was not there," he

said, "to give account of every word that his brother Spurgeon had ever uttered, nor of every aspect of every doctrine which he had presented; but as an older man than his brother, he was sure he would not be thought impertinent if he said that he, with many of his brethren throughout the country, had watched Mr. Spurgeon's course with intense and prayerful interest. They could see his growth and development towards a liberality and a symmetry of creed which had filled their hearts with gratitude and joy. Just as dear Jonathan George said at a meeting held when the Tabernacle was in a very unfinished state — there were some people who wanted to keep the eagle in a very small cage, but it was no use doing that; the eagle would either break his wings or break his cage. Well, they rejoiced that it was not the wings of the eagle which had been broken, but the cage; and they now saw the noble bird careering through the firmament in the shining light of the Sun of Righteousness." Mr. Tucker further said that "he looked upon his brother Spurgeon as one who upheld the Sovereignty of God, and who, on the other hand, declared the responsibility of man. He preached that never would the sinner repent without the aid of the Holy Ghost, and yet he called upon every sinner to 'repent, and believe the gospel.' Specially did his brother make prominent the grand doctrine of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and the kindred doctrine

of justification by faith in the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"He took it that the central object which would be exhibited by his brother in that place would be the Cross, and nothing but the Cross. The central object would not be the roll of eternal decrees, not the tables of the moral law, not the laver of baptism, not the throne of judgment; the central figure would be the Cross of the Redeemer. Right and left they would find the roll of the eternal decrees, the tables of the law, the laver of baptism, and the judgment throne; but the Cross of Jesus would stand in the midst, shedding its pure and harmonizing light over all besides. There is many a building in the Established Church of this land where one may enter, and hear as clear an exposition of gospel truth as they would hear from Mr. Spurgeon; but in many another building of the Established Church all is priestly power and sacramental efficacy. In many another all that is preached is reason, intuition, the wisdom of man and not of God. And yet all these men have subscribed to the same articles; all these men belong to the same church. Come within this building whenever they might, they would hear nothing of sacramental efficacy on the one side, or of man's reason or intuition on the other; but their dear brother would say, 'I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.'

"One word more. We are living in the days of 'Essays and Reviews,' — living in the days of a Rationalism which, for my part, I consider far more unscriptural than any Romanism. I wish to explain myself, — I mean to say that I would rather be a poor, humble-minded member of the Church of Rome, believing too much, than I would be one of those modern philosophers, too wise to believe anything at all. With this modern philosophy I have no patience! The Bible, according to these men, is an old-fashioned Book, which had its value two thousand years ago, but now its value is diminished by all the length of those two thousand years. They have now outshot the Bible, say these men, — they have got ahead of the Bible; they are now more intelligent and more wise than the Bible. Well, let them take it as they say, and then I will add, let the venerable Book have fair play after all. If by it these men are so much wiser than they would have been, then, I say, it is only fair that they should strip themselves of all they have learned from the Bible, with regard to the attributes of God, the origin of the universe, the standard of morals, the destiny of spirits beyond the grave; and if they do this, I fancy I see them peeling off coat after coat, like an onion, and getting 'small by degrees,' but not 'beautifully less,' and I do not know what will remain of them. Why, in ancient Greece there were intellects as subtle, and spirits as profound, as any

in modern times. I believe that, on some lines of philosophical inquiry, none have been able to surpass them; but when those men entered on the doctrines of theology, how far did they get? Why, just as far as this, 'The world by wisdom knew not God.' That was as far as they got. The youngest Sunday-school child, I was going to say, knows more about God than did Socrates and Plato. And if these men know more about God than Socrates and Plato, where did they get their knowledge, except where the little Sunday-scholar got his, from the Scriptures? It is easy for them to stand on the mount of Revelation, and then spurn the ground on which they stand; but let them cut that ground from under them, and down they would go into the pit."

On the following day, Wednesday, 27th March, a meeting was held, in which representatives of the neighboring ministers expressed their sympathy with Mr. Spurgeon and his enterprise. Dr. Edward Steane presided. We must refer the reader to the full report, published separately, and to be had of the publishers, for the full details, and content ourselves by giving a portion of the address delivered by the Rev. George Rogers, who was for many years the theological tutor of the Pastors' College.

Mr. Rogers said: —

"He had been told that the building was an extravagant affair, a nine days' wonder, and that before many months had passed it would be converted

into a penny theatre. A man's prophecy was often the intimation of his desire; the wish was father to the thought. Such a remark might apply if it had been a simple speculation, erected for an untried object; but I believe it to be the result of a gradual and solid growth. A giant infancy and giant youth required a habitation of its own when it came to manhood. I feel, and all must feel, that this magnificent structure has been raised as a public homage to the doctrines which Mr. Spurgeon preaches, and to the earnest manner in which he has proclaimed them. This house is built, not for him, but for the God whom he serves; not for him, but for the Saviour whom he loves; not for him, but for the Holy Spirit on whom he relies; not for him, but for the church over which he presides; not for him, but for the souls by whom he is encompassed. It was a noble memorial of the unseen realities of the faith of the gospel. To every passer-by it would be a witness that the Tabernacle of God was with man, and that He would dwell among them. To every eye it would tell of the liberty and independence which Protestant Dissenters could claim in this land, and of the readiness of the Christian public to support doctrines of such a nature when earnestly preached. Some ascribed it to the infatuation of the people. Why, Englishmen were not such fools as to give their money without consideration, and without an approval of the object! Some time ago,

in a continental city, the priest of a certain cathedral got up a subscription for a golden crown to be put on the head of the Virgin. A solemn festival was held on the occasion of the coronation, at which the king and his courtiers were present. But one man retired from the scene to weep; and when asked why he wept, he said, 'They have put a golden crown on the head of the Virgin, but there is no crown for the infant Jesus.' But here, what they had done was to put a crown on the head of Christ, and as they would often sing in that place, to 'crown Him Lord of all!'

"The building gave the lie to those who said the doctrines of grace were inimical to good works. Our friend Mr. Spurgeon preaches all the doctrines of grace. Election and Particular Redemption come from his lips in trumpet tones. Some said that those doctrines were destructive of all good works, — that people who listened to such doctrines did nothing. His answer to these objections was, let them look at this building. Election would never have built it, except by seeking to make their calling and election sure. Particular Redemption would never have built it without the particular love it was calculated to inspire. The doctrine of Perseverance would never have built it without the act of perseverance. Faith would never have built it without works. One of his students, who came late one morning, said his clock did not go right. I told him it was an Antinomian

clock, — it was without good works. The creed of Mr. Spurgeon was not Antinomian, and that building was a witness to it. Nor would works without faith have built it. No tree could grow without being well watered at the roots; and if they wished this tree of theirs to grow and bear much fruit, they must bring down the rains and dews of heaven by their prayers. Why were they, the neighboring ministers and churches, there, but to show that the object was not to set up altar against altar. It was to publish the same doctrine that they preached. The God whom we all honor is to be honored in this place. The Saviour whom we love is to be exalted in this place. The gospel which we love is to be preached here. The atonement on which we rest our hope is to be here the open fountain for sin and for uncleanness. I therefore feel an interest in the building; and all my brethren in the ministry must have a common interest in it. Although one star might differ from another star in glory, it was their combined rays that guided the pilgrim in the desert, and the mariner upon the wave.

"They had done a good work, and had worked long, and hard, and unitedly. What was next to be done? They had now no more to do with begging, with bricks and mortar, and with bazaars. Let them turn all their energies into spiritual channels; let the hands that had been stretched out to labor be lifted up in prayer; let the feet that had

borne them to the houses of the rich to collect gold, now carry them to the habitations of the poor, to give them that consolation whose price is above rubies. Having such a start, great things are expected of you. The eyes of the Church and the world are upon you. There is much grace needed, and it is to be had with faith and prayer. I came to this meeting from the bed of an aged lady, and when I told her I was coming to Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, she said, 'May it be a house in which thousands shall be turned to God!' That is my wish, and I am sure it is the wish of you all."

How largely and blessedly that wish has been fulfilled, the intervening thirty years have abundantly shown, but eternity alone will fully reveal it.

Other meetings followed at short intervals, interspersed with a sermon now and then on special subjects, — notably one by Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, on "Christian Baptism." There was a meeting of the church, over which Rev. John Spurgeon, the pastor's father, presided. Then came meetings for the "Exposition of the Doctrines of Grace," when, for the first time, the pastor's brother, Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, then of Southampton, took a prominent part.

More than thirty years have passed since these opening services were held, and the congregation has in no degree diminished. Up to the time of the pastor's recent long and serious illness, the vast

building continued crowded; as, indeed, it was all the time that other able and honored brethren occupied his pulpit while he lay sick, or rested in his Riviera retreat. The church also has constantly increased, until for many years there have been more than five thousand members, so that, could they all attend the Lord's Supper at one time, every seat in the Tabernacle would be occupied.

The total cost of all the buildings then completed was £31,332 4s. 10d., which was all raised by voluntary effort.

On Wednesday, April 10th, the church met with a large number of believers of various denominations to commune at the Lord's table, when Dr. Steane remarked that, "in the largest of Nonconformist sanctuaries, they met as the largest number of believers who had ever communed together at one time since the days of their glorified Lord."

Since these opening services many memorable gatherings have been held in the Tabernacle; but probably no one of them has equalled in interest and impressiveness the joyous and solemn assemblies that will gather there for united thanksgiving when the beloved pastor is once more able to take his accustomed place after his long and trying affliction.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

AS one of the results of the rekindled fire on the altar of the Lord at New Park Street Chapel, several young men of promise and ability for usefulness were gathered into the church within the first three months of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry there. Among these was a young man only four months younger than Mr. Spurgeon, who himself was only one month over twenty. This youth asked counsel of the young pastor. Mr. Spurgeon's reply will show how well fitted he was to deal with persons in such a condition of mind.

75 Dover Road, Borough,
July 14*th*, 1854.

Dear Sir, — I am glad that you have been able to write to me and state your feelings. Though my hands are always full, it will ever give me joy to receive such notes as yours.

You ask a very important question, "Are you one of God's elect?" This is a question neither you nor I can answer at present. I will ask you an easier one, "Are you a sinner?" Can you say "Yes"? All say yes; but then they do not know what the word means. A sinner is one who has broken all his Maker's commands, despised His name, and run into rebellion against the Most High. A sinner deserves hell, yea, the hottest place in hell; and if he be saved, it must be entirely by unmerited

mercy. Now, if you are such a sinner, I am glad to be able to tell you the way of salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

I think you have not yet really understood what believing means. You are, I trust, really awakened; but you do not see the door yet. I advise you seriously to be much alone, I mean as much as you can; let your groans go up to heaven if you cannot pray; attend as many services as possible, and if you go with an earnest desire for a blessing, it will come very soon. But why not believe now? You have only to believe that Jesus is able and willing to save, and then trust yourself to Him.

Harbor not that dark suggestion to forsake the house of God; remember you thereby turn your back on heaven, and your face to hell, the moment you do that. I pray God that He will keep you. If the Lord had meant to destroy you, He would not have showed you such things as these. If you are but a smoking flax there is hope. Touch the hem of His garment. Look to the brazen serpent.

My dear fellow-sinner, slight not this season of awakening; up and be in earnest. It is your soul, your *own* soul, your eternal welfare, that is at stake. There is the Cross, and a bleeding God-Man upon it; look to Him and be saved! There is the Holy Spirit able to give you every grace. Look in prayer to the sacred Three-One God, and then you will be delivered.

I am

Your anxious friend,

Write again. C. H. Spurgeon.

The young man was really in earnest to find the Saviour, and he was soon after able to rest on Christ. When his load of sin was gone he did "write again," and the pastor replied as follows: —

75 Dover Road, *August 7th*, 154.

My dear Sir, — Your letters have given me great joy. I trust I see in you the marks of a son of God, and I earnestly pray that you may have the evidence within that you are born of God.

There is no reason why you should not be baptized. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Think very seriously of it, for it is a solemn matter. Count the cost. You are now about to be buried to the world, and you may well say, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!" The friends who were with you in the days of your carnal pleasure will strive to entice you from Christ. I pray that the grace of God may be mightily manifest in you, keeping you steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

I should like to see you on Thursday evening after six o'clock in the vestry.

I am

Yours faithfully,

C. H. Spurgeon.

The personal interview was satisfactory to Mr. Spurgeon; he believed in the genuineness of the work of grace in the heart of his young friend, though it was evident that his mind needed information and cultivation. The young man was baptized and admitted into the church, and at once commenced Christian work, — visiting the sick, distributing tracts, teaching in the Sunday-school, and after a time he became engaged in outdoor preaching. He grew in grace and in knowledge, and discovered gifts likely to be useful for evangelization and edification. But he needed teaching and training, and he thankfully accepted an offer from Mr. Spurgeon thus to be helped for the service of the church.

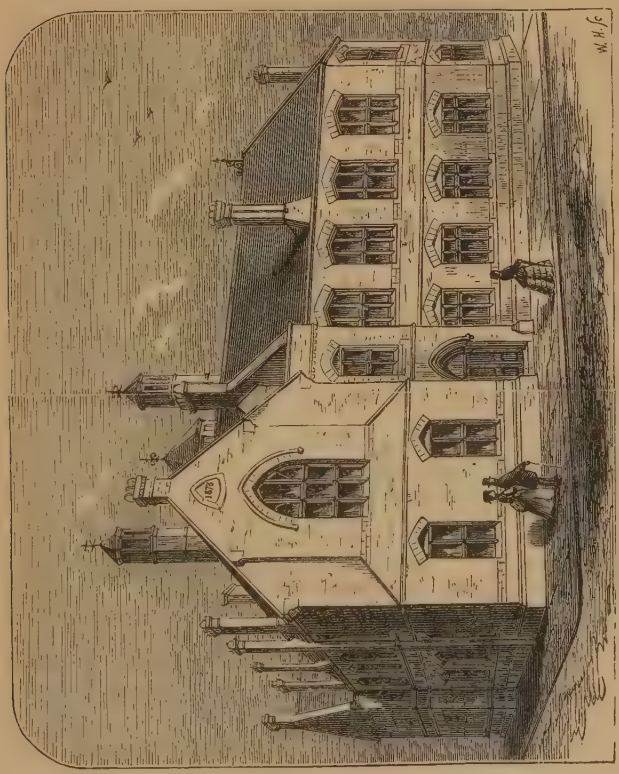
At first Mr. Spurgeon took him in hand personally; but his duties and engagements increasing, he placed him under the charge of Rev. C. H. Hosken, then

pastor of the Baptist Church at Crayford, Kent. This was really the commencement of the Pastors' College, and the young man above mentioned, Mr. Thomas William Medhurst, was the first student. The Rev. George Rogers, of Albany Congregational Chapel, Camberwell, whose name had been suggested to Mr. Spurgeon by the Rev. Jonathan George, of Walworth, became, after a short time, the honored principal and theological tutor. Though differing from Mr. Spurgeon in his views on baptism, his thorough soundness in the faith, and his unquestioned capacity for the work of theological instruction, commended him to Mr. Spurgeon, who found in him all he expected, and more. Mr. Rogers recently passed away in his ninety-third year, having been for several years succeeded in his tutorship by Professor Gracey, a man of ripe scholarship, pleasing manners, sound doctrine, genial spirit, and able alike as a teacher, a preacher, and a writer.

Mr. Medhurst has held on his way with honor to himself and no small measure of usefulness, holding pastorates at Kingston-on-Thames; Coleraine, in Ireland; Glasgow; and Portsmouth; and having thus exercised his ministry in the three divisions of the United Kingdom, he has recently settled in the Principality, at Cardiff.

Of the other early students of the College, we may name Mr. Davies, of Greenwich, who is dead; Mr. Genders, of Ilfracombe; Mr. Archibald Brown, of the

East London Tabernacle; Mr. Cuff, of the Shoreditch Tabernacle; Mr. Burton, whose recent death was a blow to many; and Professors Gracey and Marchant,



THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

who are now tutors of the College in which they were formerly students.

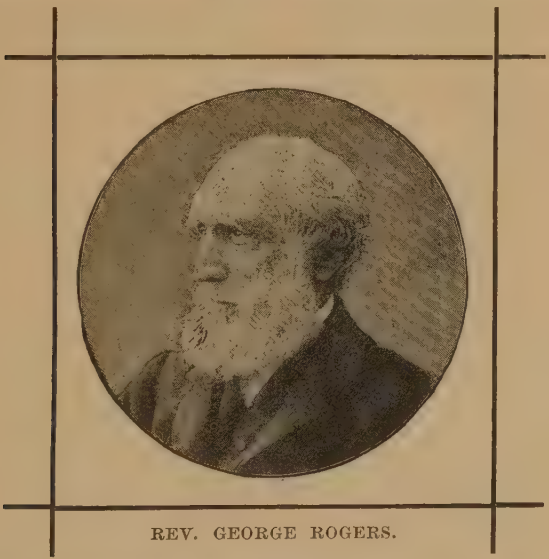
Mr. Spurgeon's own account of the reasons why he started a new school for the sons of the prophets,

when several of various degrees of excellence were already in existence, ought to be considered as a sufficient answer to the question, Why found another college?

"No college at that time appeared to me to be suitable for the class of men that the providence and grace of God drew around me. They were mostly poor, and most of the colleges involved necessarily a considerable outlay to the student; for even where the education was free, books, clothes, and other incidental expenses required a considerable sum per annum. Moreover, it must be frankly admitted that my views of the gospel and of the mode of training preachers were, and are, somewhat peculiar. I may have been uncharitable in my judgment, but I thought the Calvinism of the theology usually taught to be very doubtful, and the fervor of the generality of the students to be far behind their literary attainments. It seemed to me that preachers of the grand old truths of the gospel, ministers suitable for the masses, were more likely to be found in an institution where preaching and divinity would be the main objects, and not degrees and other insignia of human learning. I felt that, without interfering with the laudable objects of other colleges, I could do good in my own way. These and other considerations led me to take a few tried young men, and to put them under some able minister, that he might train them in the Scriptures, and in other knowledge helpful to the

understanding and proclamation of the truth. This step appeared plain, but how the work was to be conducted and supported was the question, — a question, be it added, solved almost before it occurred.

"Two friends, Mr. Winsor and Mr. W. Olney, both deacons of the church, promised aid, which, with what



REV. GEORGE ROGERS.

I could give myself, enabled me to take one student, and I set about to find a tutor. In Mr. George Rogers, then the pastor of the Independent Church, Albany Road, Camberwell, God sent us the very best man. He had been preparing for such work, and was anxiously waiting for it. This gentleman . . . is a man of Puritanic stamp, deeply learned, orthodox in

doctrine, judicious, witty, devout, earnest, liberal in spirit, and withal juvenile in heart to an extent most remarkable in one of his years. My connection with him has been one of uninterrupted comfort and delight. The most sincere affection exists between us; we are of one mind and of one heart; and what is equally important, he has, in every case, secured, not merely the respect, but the filial love of every student. Into this beloved minister's house the first students were introduced, and for a considerable period they were domiciled as members of his family.

"Encouraged by the readiness with which the young men found spheres of labor, and by their singular success in soul-winning, I enlarged the number, but the whole means of sustaining them came from my own purse. The large sale of my sermons in America, together with my dear wife's economy, enabled me to spend from £600 to £800 a year in my own favorite work; but on a sudden — owing to my denunciations of the then existing slavery in the States — my entire resources from that 'brook Cherith' were dried up. I paid as large sums as I could from my own income, and resolved to spend all I had, and then take the cessation of my means as a voice from the Lord to stay the effort; as I am firmly persuaded that we ought, under no pretence, to go into debt. On one occasion I proposed the sale of my horse and carriage, although these were almost absolute necessaries to me on account of my continual journeys in

preaching the Word. This, my friend Mr. Rogers would not hear of, and actually offered to be the loser rather than this should be done. Then it was that I told my difficulties to my people, and the 'Weekly Offering' commenced, but the incomings from that source were so meagre as to be hardly worth calculating upon. I was reduced to the last pound, when a letter came from a banker in the City, informing me that a lady, whose name I have never been able to discover, had deposited a sum of £200, to be used for the education of young men for the ministry. How did my heart leap for joy! I threw myself then and henceforth upon the bounteous care of the Lord, whom I desired, with my whole heart, to glorify by this effort. Some weeks after, another £100 came in from the same bank, as I was informed, from another hand. Soon after, a friend began to provide an annual supper for the friends of the College, at which considerable sums have, from year to year, been given. A supper was given by my liberal publishers, Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, to celebrate the publishing of my five-hundredth weekly sermon, at which £500 were raised and presented to the funds. The College grew every month, and the number of the students rapidly increased from one to forty. Friends known and unknown, from far and near, were moved to give little or much to my work, and so the funds increased as the need enlarged. Then another earnest deacon of the church espoused as his special

work the 'Weekly Offering,' and by the unanimous voice of the church under my care, the College was adopted as its own child. Since that hour the 'Weekly Offering' has been a steady source of income, till, in the year 1869, the amount reached exactly £1,869.

"There have been, during this period, times of great trial of my faith, but after a season of straitness, never amounting to absolute want, the Lord has always interposed, and sent me large sums (on one occasion £1,000) from unknown donors."

Mr. Spurgeon was somewhat apprehensive that when the work of the Stockwell Orphanage was thrust upon him, funds might be diverted from the College to the newer institution. Such may have been the case to some extent, but God has not allowed either of them to suffer want.

"If the Lord wills the work to be continued," says Mr. Spurgeon, "He will send His servant a due portion of the gold and silver which are all His own: and therefore, as I wait on Him in prayer, the all-gracious Provider will supply all my needs."

While speaking of pecuniary matters, he adds that, "as many of the young men trained in the College have raised new congregations, and gathered fresh churches, another need has arisen, — namely, money for building chapels. It is ever so in Christ's work; one link draws on another, one effort makes another needed. For chapel-building the College funds could do but little, though they have freely

been used to support men while they were collecting congregations."

"Pecuniary needs, however," Mr. Spurgeon continues, "have made up but a small part of our cares. Many have been my personal exercises in selecting the men. Candidates have always been plentiful, and the choice has been wide; but it is a serious responsibility to reject any, and yet more to accept them for training. When mistakes have been made, a second burden has been laid upon me in the dismissal of those who appeared to be unfit. Even with the most careful management, and all the assistance of tutors and friends, no human foresight can secure that in every case a man shall be what we believed and hoped. A brother may be exceedingly useful as an occasional preacher, he may distinguish himself as a diligent student, he may succeed at first in the ministry, and yet, when trials of temper and character occur in the pastorate, he may be found wanting. We have had comparatively few causes for regret of this sort, but there have been some such, and these pierce us with many sorrows. I devoutly bless God that He has sent to the College some of the holiest, soundest, and most self-denying preachers I know; and I pray that He may continue to do so; but it would be more than a miracle if all should excel. While thus speaking of trials connected with the men themselves, it is due to our gracious God to bear testimony that these have been comparatively light,

and are not worthy to be compared with the great joy which we experience in seeing so many [1] brethren still serving the Lord according to their measure of gift, and . . . contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints; nor is the joy less in remembering that several [2] have sweetly fallen asleep after having fought a good fight. At this hour some of our most flourishing Baptist churches are presided over by pastors trained in our College; and as years shall add ripeness of experience and stability of character, others will be found to stand in the front rank of the Lord's host."

The students of the Pastors' College, unlike those of other colleges, are generally boarded out in twos and threes, in the houses of friends around the Tabernacle, at a moderate weekly sum. Mr. Spurgeon believes that the plan of separate lodging is preferable to the usual method of having all under one roof. By the latter method men are isolated from domestic scenes and habits, and are all too apt to fall into superabundant levity. The circumstances of the families where the young men are entertained are generally such that the future ministers are not elevated above the social position they are likely to occupy in future years, and are kept in connection with the struggles and conditions of everyday life.

[1] In the report for 1889–90, the number is 607, besides 30 non-pastors, but regularly engaged in the Lord's work.

[2] Pastors, 65; students, 7. Report for 1889–90.

Devotional habits are cultivated among the students, and they are urged to do as much evangelistic work as possible. For this, however, they have little time, though abundant opportunities. The usual term of study is two or three years, in some cases extending to four, according to the amount of education previously secured, and also as the capacity for more advanced studies may suggest; but there is no hard and fast rule.

The Tabernacle Church supplies a good number of candidates, and these are commonly such as have attended the Evening Classes, where young men can devote the hours after business to the acquirement of general knowledge, and the study of the elementary branches of theology.

There have been many complaints made in the denominational papers of the supply of ministers exceeding the demand. There is some truth in this; but it must be remembered that there are ministers and ministers; and, taking the world as the field, we need still to pray the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth laborers into His vineyard. But they must be laborers; and it by no means follows that every man, however small his sphere, must devote all his time and energies to the cultivation of his one little patch. Either he must break up fresh ground, or, if this is denied him, there is no sufficient reason why he should not aid his income by some suitable secular calling. But Mr. Spurgeon believes

that there is still great need, indeed, growing necessity for more men, only they must be of the right stamp. Here are his own words: —

"If the Lord would but send us funds commensurate, there are hundreds of neighborhoods needing the pure gospel, which we could by His grace change from deserts into gardens. *How far this is a call upon the reader, let him judge as in the sight of God.* Shall there be the gifts and graces of the Spirit given to the Church, and shall there not also be sufficient bestowed of the earthly treasure? 'How much owest thou unto my Lord?'"

As to the quality of the preachers sent out by this College, facts speak, though as a matter of course all are not equally gifted, nor all alike successful. Fitness for any particular sphere is a very important condition of success. A man may fail, or have little success in one sphere, but in another the results of his labors may be manifold and lasting.

The good Earl of Shaftesbury was a well-qualified judge of Christian work, and an equally impartial witness. Speaking in Finsbury Chapel, some ten or eleven years ago, he said: "It is an utter fallacy to suppose that the people of England will ever be brought to a sense of order and discipline by the repetition of miserable services, by bits of wax candle, by rags of Popery, and by gymnastics in the church; nothing is adapted to meet the wants of the people but the gospel message brought home to

their hearts, and he knew of none who had done better service in this evangelistic work than the pupils trained in Mr. Spurgeon's College. They had a singular faculty for addressing the population, and going to the very heart of the people."

It is now much too late to argue for the need or the utility of the institution. A greater than man decided that long ago; and, as the writer can bear witness, the quality of the men, as preachers of the gospel and teachers of the people, improves from year to year; and the increase of the churches pastored by men who have been trained at the Pastors' College maintains a high ratio, never surpassed, and seldom equalled in churches presided over by men from other colleges. We speak of this as a fact, and to provoke to holy emulation.

Mr. Spurgeon has been specially favored by the gentlemen who have been sent to him as his helpers. After having mentioned several by name, he adds: "Lastly, but not least, I adore the goodness of God which sent me so dear and efficient a fellow-helper as my brother in the flesh and in the Lord, J. A. Spurgeon. His work has greatly relieved me of anxiety, and his superior educational qualifications have tended to raise the tone of the instruction given."

For some years the educational work of the College was carried on in the dark, subterranean rooms under the Tabernacle, but when the new College buildings were completed, these rooms were vacated.

The College buildings are somewhat to the rear, but contiguous to the Tabernacle property. There are two fine halls, excellent class-rooms, a handsome library, and all the requirements of a college. The building was erected and furnished at a cost of

J. A. SPURGEON.

£15,000, all of which was paid as soon as the work was finished.

"The way in which the money was raised," says Mr. Spurgeon, "was another instance of Divine goodness. £3,000 was given as a memorial to a dear and lamented husband. £2,000 was a legacy to the College from a reader of the sermons. The ministers who had formerly been students came to our help in

a princely fashion. Large amounts were made up by the offerings of Tabernacle friends on days when the pastor invited the members and adherents to be the guests at the College. In answer to prayer, the gold and silver have been ready when needed. How my heart exalts and blesses the name of the Lord!"

Of the men educated in the College, a large majority are pastors in England, and others in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. A considerable number are missionaries in India, China, South America, the West Indies, Spain, France, North Africa, South Africa, and the Congo State; while about forty are doing pastoral work or evangelizing in the United States and the Dominion of Canada, and several are occupying prominent stations in Australia and New Zealand. In addition to all these, the names of quite a number of men as evangelists, such as Messrs. Fullerton and Smith, are well known and esteemed for their character and successful labors in all parts of the United Kingdom. Nor must we omit to mention Mr. Spurgeon's twin sons, one of whom is the pastor of a large and flourishing church at Greenwich, and the other, after building the Auckland Tabernacle, and being very successful as pastor there, is engaged in evangelistic work in New Zealand.

Pastor Charles Spurgeon has the advantage of his father's name and fame; which may not always be an advantage, however, for the public are not always just

in their expectations. He enjoys, nevertheless, considerable popularity; and what is far better and more healthy to a minister's heart and life, he fulfils his ministry with growing acceptance and usefulness. The writer has pleasant recollections of his visit to South Street, Greenwich, during the time the junior Spurgeon was on his trip round the world in search of health. The large chapel was well filled, both morning and evening; that is, nearly every available seat was occupied: the audience was one to which it was easy to preach, and the singing was hearty in the extreme. Within the Metropolitan area, there are few Baptist churches so well attended, so well managed, and so prosperous in their various enterprises. May the blessing of his father's God, his mother's prayers, and those of all the Spurgeons who have preceded them, ever rest upon him and his brother!

So far as results can be tabulated, the additions to the membership of churches in the Baptist denomination, which are due, under God, to the earnest labors of the Pastors' College men, are such as to fill sympathizing hearts with gladness. The total number baptized from the commencement is over 90,000 and the total increase of these churches during the same period exceeds 150,000. The whole Baptist denomination has increased at a much smaller rate than the churches connected with the Pastors' College.

Undoubtedly, no one of the many institutions connected with the Tabernacle lies so near the Pastor's

CHARLES SPURGEON.

THOMAS SPURGEON.

heart as the College, and for its future good we know he is prayerfully solicitous. May he never, for one moment, be suffered to doubt that he still has the sympathy of the Lord's own people in this work, and may it be shown in the most practical of all ways, by earnest prayer and liberal gifts! Not less than from £120 to £150 are required every week to carry on this work.

A large number of the men trained at the College meet in conference year by year. The attendance has been increased of late years by the addition of a company of ministers not trained in the Pastors' College, but who are closely in sympathy with Mr. Spurgeon in his thorough evangelical views, and his bold witness-bearing for the truth once for all delivered to the saints. These Conferences are blessed means of grace, and a holy, humble, devotional, and joyful spirit pervades the assemblies, and unites all hearts. The annual addresses of the President are looked forward to for many months, and remembered long afterwards. That of 1891 has been published in a separate form, under the title of "The Greatest Fight in the World," and has had a large sale.

In the "Notes" of "The Sword and the Trowel" for October, 1891, are the following references to this address:—

"During the past month we have received the German translation of 'The Greatest Fight in the World.' In sending it, the translator says, 'The first edition of

5,000 is sold out; this is one of the second 5,000.' The French translation, made by Pasteur R. Saillens, of Paris, will soon be issued; and permission has been given for a Danish translation to be published.

"The little book has been reprinted by more than one firm in the United States; and it has been most favorably reviewed. 'The New York Observer' says of it: 'It is the mature, deliberate, long-considered, intensely earnest and powerful utterance of a man who has long been marvellously laborious and successful in various departments of spiritual work.' 'The Lutheran Observer,' Philadelphia, says: 'It will serve as an admirable tonic to all ministers and Christians generally, and especially to any who may have their faith shaken by theories of modern critics.'

"Have all our readers read 'The Greatest Fight in the World'? It has had a very large sale in England; but it might be the means of doing still more good if all friends would do what they can to increase its circulation. We do not believe that its mission is fully accomplished yet."

The messages and letters received at the Conferences of the Pastors' College Evangelical Association from the mission-fields, the British Colonies, and the United States, and from brethren in the United Kingdom who are unable to be present, are all full of brotherly love for the honored President, and his brother, the Vice-President, and the tutors of the College, and they usually record much earnest work

accomplished for the Lord. For many years the Conference has been closed with a sermon by the President, followed by the Communion, at the close of which all in the assembly stand, with their hands linked in token of their fraternal fellowship, while the Scotch version of Psalm cxxii. is sung. It is as follows: —

"Pray that Jerusalem may have
Peace and felicity:
Let them that love thee and thy peace
Have still prosperity.

"Therefore I wish that peace may still
Within thy walls remain,
And ever may thy palaces
Prosperity retain.

"Now, for my friends' and brethren's sakes,
Peace be in thee, I 'll say;
And for the house of God our Lord,
I 'll seek thy good alway."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SOCIETY OF EVANGELISTS.

IN connection with the Pastors' College is a society bearing the above title, whose workers we have already referred to; but as the work is manifestly growing in importance and usefulness, it needs a special mention here.

Many of the most successful pastors in former times gave a portion of their time to evangelistic work. We would mention the names of some whose labors in this respect have been greatly blessed of God, in planting the seeds of divine truth, and in promoting the spiritual interest of the Church, especially in connection with Nonconformity. The labors of Whitefield and Wesley were very much of this nature, and their helpers and followers trod in their footsteps. John Elias, Christmas Evans, and many others, including Charles, of Bala, did this work very thoroughly in the Principality, the results of which are manifest everywhere within its borders to-day. The Rev. Richard Davis, of Rowell, Northamptonshire; the Rev. John Giles, of Eythorne; the Rev. John Palmer, of Shrewsbury; the Rev. Mr.

Grimshaw, in his parish church at Haworth, and in multitudes of places around, — did this work very earnestly, and with large results in souls converted, churches founded, and religious institutions established. In fact, every pastor should be an evangelist; that is, "a messenger of good," seeking to carry the gospel to all he can reach. Neither can he make full proof of his ministry if he does not cry to the unconverted and the undecided: "O ye dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord."

But there has always been a need, and there is need still, for men specially qualified for the Lord's work as evangelists, devoted more or less entirely to that work. Moreover, as in the apostolic age, God has constantly prepared men for this particular work. "He gave some . . . evangelists."

Conspicuously in the front rank of the Pastors' College Evangelists stand Mr. W. Y. Fullerton and Mr. J. Manton Smith, the former distinguished for his very remarkable power as a preacher of the gospel, and the latter noted for the charm of his gospel songs, and the manner in which he leads the singing of a great assembly with the silver cornet presented to him by Mr. Spurgeon. Both these brethren hold fast and hold forth the great truths of the everlasting gospel; and the same is true of Mr. Burnham, Mr. Harmer, and Mr. Harrison. The income of the Society of Evangelists in 1890–91 reached £1,233 16s. 8d.

W. Y. FULLERTON.

J. MANTON SMITH.

In his last Report of the work of himself and Mr. Smith, Mr. Fullerton writes: —

"During the year from March, 1890, to February, 1891, twenty-three places have been visited. The list of names can be read elsewhere in the Report. Suffice it to say that our sphere of service has varied from the Metropolitan Tabernacle, with its vast capacity, to a quiet mission-hall, holding scarcely three hundred people; and from the throng of London to a sedate Suffolk town, or Yorkshire hamlet; and from a busy manufacturing centre in the North to an old-world Cornish port, or aristocratic watering-place.

"But the gospel we have preached has varied not at all, and we have found, as of yore, that the old truth is suited to all men, whether they be subtle or simple. Indeed, I am more and more convinced that my countryman, who declared that 'one man 's as good as another, and far better' — the last clause referring, of course, to his own country, Ireland — was not far wrong. In town or village, east or west, the cross is the key to unlock the human heart.

"Our field has been as wide in the denominations it has embraced as the localities it has included. Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, Bible Christians, and the Society of Friends, have in turn been visited, besides many public halls; among them may be mentioned the immense St. George's Hall, in Bradford, which, during our mission there in September

last, was frequently used and filled. We have not preached in any Episcopalian Church, or Salvation Army Barracks, or Brethren's Room, though many from all these sections have attended the meetings. Our work is thus truly catholic; not undenominational, but inter-denominational; and in this connection we cannot speak too highly of the effective aid rendered by the various Y. M. C. A's. and Y. W. C. A's., and kindred institutions, with which we have been brought in contact.

"What are the benefits of such an effort? If associated with the regular church work, it should be like the horse which is, at the steep hill, attached to the tram-car to give it a pull over a hard place. To constant workers it should be, like a brief visit to the sea, invigorating for the year's usual service. To the undecided in the various congregations, it should be like a few days of intense summer heat ripening the corn which was sown long ago by faithful hands.

"Are such results realized? Speaking from our own experience, Yes. And having visited five places this year for the second time, we would emphasize that answer, Yes. Even after ten years' interval, many have come forward in the place where the meetings were held, and spoken of the blessing personally received at them; some who were then brought to Christ, we now find earnest workers, deacons of churches, and even ministers of the Word.

"In addition to this, we never get into any place without testimony, often multiplied testimony, being given of definite decision for Christ in some other district. This, of course, is a result which will not show in the church-books of that other place.

"And how many Christians, whose outward life is irreproachable, nevertheless, in heart, have gone away from God! We count it one of our greatest privileges to be permitted, as we often are to lead such into the light again. It is so easy for them to open their minds to strangers who are only exercising a fugitive ministry, and it would be so difficult to ask counsel of those near whom they always live.

"In most cases, as an outcome of the mission, regular classes or prayer-meetings are arranged. At New Court Chapel, in the North of London, a large Sunday Afternoon Men's Meeting has been established, and carried on with much enthusiasm ever since; at Fulham, a Nonconformist Union, embracing nearly a score of churches, has been organized to carry on social, temperance, and evangelistic work; and many other unofficial efforts take their rise in the quickened life of the special services.

"But the chief result is, and must always be, that then and there men and women and children are led into the kingdom of God. In most places, hundreds have declared that they have passed from death to

life; and while, doubtless, some of these were already regenerate, and only lacked assurance, and many were under impression ere the mission began, a considerable number of others have been drawn to the services, perhaps by curiosity, or by the extra effort put forth by some earnest friend, or to listen to Mr. Smith's singing or cornet, or even, as during the past awful winter, to get shelter, — who have been met with by the Spirit of God, and led to the feet of Jesus. Some great sinners, both men and women, have thus been reached.

"The chief argument for such services, however lies in the very fact that those led to distinct avowal of faith in Jesus, are in great measure those that had been previously impressed. Under the regular ministry of the Word there appears to them little urgent reason why they should decide for Christ on one Sunday more than on another; and there is but a slight excuse for timid Christians approaching them to urge them to do so. But when the Special Mission is arranged, all that is changed. There is now every reason for instant decision, and every excuse for importunate pleading with the unsaved. Some brethren object to these efforts, I know; but why they should approve of the gospel being preached three times a week, and object to its being preached ten times a week, I could never understand; or what possible harm can accrue from the diffused energies of the church being concentrated, for a week or two, in one

burning effort to reach the outside world, I cannot imagine.

"Two days ago, at Ilfracombe, where these lines are written, a fire was discovered in a house, and, fortunately, extinguished with but little damage. No cause could be discovered for it, until, as they waited and speculated, the fire broke out afresh, when they found, to their intense astonishment, that it was ignited by means of a water-bottle, which focussed the rays of the sun on one spot on the table, until it began to burn. The water-bottle was a most unlikely instrument, but, like the Special Service, it concentrated the else diffused light into one burning point, and the result was — a fire. To produce a fire of grace, it needs Christians as clear as glass in motive and aim, filled to the full with the living water of the Spirit of God, and dwelling in the unclouded light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then we shall set fire to the devil's standing corn, or to the house, wherein he has, like a strong man armed, kept his goods in the peace of carnal security. May the Lord send us more of these conflagrations!"

Another outgrowth of the Pastors' College is the

PASTORS' COLLEGE MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

By its means two of the missionaries of the NORTH AFRICAN MISSION are supported, and others will be added to them as means and opportunities permit.

The following letters from Dr. Churcher and Mr. Patrick will give some idea of their work up to March, 1891 : —

TULLOCH MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, TANGIER.

"I have delayed several days in sending this note in the vain hope of thinking of something special for the College Report. Five years in Morocco have only

served to drive home more forcibly than ever upon my heart that the one thing special about this land is its need, its *awful* need of the gospel. Creeds and systems, faith and fanaticism they have in abundance, but they *do* need salvation.

"Our little hospital, of which I enclose a photo, has now some five-and-twenty patients constantly with us, receiving not only bodily blessing, but daily gospel teaching. Then there are the out-patients, and we have also a dispensary for Jews and Spaniards, by whom together some 6,000 visits were paid to us last year.

"Patients come from the most distant parts of the land, and some at least we believe carry back with them the gospel into the outer darkness of the regions beyond. For there are hundreds of thousands, yes, millions in this land alone, who have never heard of Jesus as the only Saviour, nor even seen a real Christian.

"Last week one of the few natives who we believe have received Jesus into their hearts died rather suddenly. He was very ignorant, but he had boldly acknowledged his faith in the Saviour before many others, and though none of us were with him when he died, it was comforting to hear from his wife that at the last he urged her not to forget to trust in Jesus.

"We are told that the Lord's people shall come out of *every* tribe. May some of our good brethren of

the College be led to come out to gather in the Lord's chosen ones from Morocco!

"T. GILLARD CHURCHER."

"It is distasteful to write about one's own work but I suppose it is a necessity.

"At the present time, in the Café Oriental, and a Mission Cottage, we are holding six Evangelistic meetings each week for the Spaniards, and they are all more largely attended than when I wrote you last year. Our Monday night prayer-meeting is especially encouraging and helpful.

"On Tuesday and Saturday afternoons, Dr. Churcher conducts a Dispensary in the Café, which is connected with the Mildmay Mission to the Jews; very many Jews and Spaniards come for medicine. A service is held with the patients before the doctoring commences.

"Each Thursday and Saturday evening, a class is held to teach reading and writing in Spanish. The number is limited to ten, for lack of competent teachers.

"Every Friday evening my wife conducts a Mothers' Meeting in the Cottage. She had just returned from the meeting, and tells me that eighteen mothers and twelve children were present.

"Each afternoon, Saturdays and Sundays excepted, a day-school is held, and the children are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic by a Spaniard, whom I

employ, named Pablo. I hope he is a converted man. About sixteen little ones attend regularly. My wife and myself try to teach them our gospel hymns and the way of salvation.

"About six weeks since, we transferred our Sunday morning English service from Hope House to the Café Oriental, hoping thereby to be successful in obtaining larger congregations. We are encouraged in this effort. The average attendance has been about twenty-eight.

"We dare not say anything about the number of our converts, but our work is only a small one. If, however, in one of our meetings, I were to ask all who believed in Jesus Christ to stand, every one would immediately rise. Every one says he believes, and is saved, and mostly adds, 'I have been a Christian since I was a baby.' We have a small band of men and women that are evidently growing in grace. Some, that for a time seemed to follow Christ, have turned back, to their shame and to our sorrow. Some have returned to Spain; and while this in one way is trying, we always hope that, having heard the gospel of the grace of God, they may carry the good news to their own country.

"N. HARDINGHAM PATRICK."

PIONEER MISSION WORK.

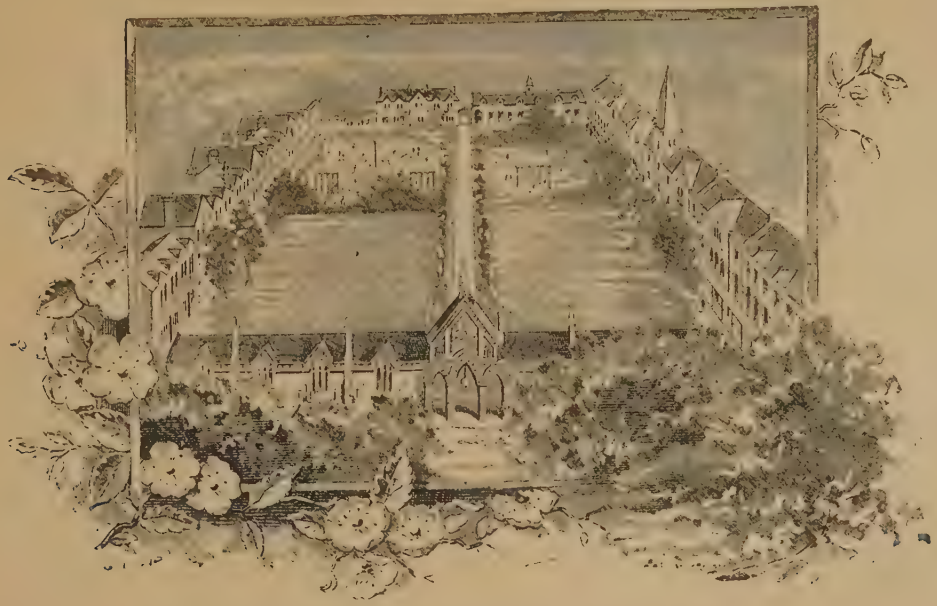
Still another outcome of the Pastors' College is the *Pioneer Work* of Mr. E. A. Carter and his help-

ers. This is distinctly Home Mission work, and the following paragraph, from the Annual Report for 1890–91, will explain the character and objects of the enterprise: —

"The object of our Pioneer work is to spread the glorious gospel in its fulness, and to establish centres of work for our denomination where they do not exist. It may not be known to all our readers that there are many places in England, with large populations, where at present there is no Baptist church. Many of our families remove to these neighborhoods, and full often they and their children are lost to us. This ought not to be, when we consider the importance of those New Testament principles for which we contend.

"Our work is largely of an Evangelistic and Pioneer character; for its object is to break up the ground which a pastor may eventually till. That there is great need for this effort, we are learning more and more; and we need but God's blessing, the right men, and plenty of funds, that we may go ahead."

Work has been commenced at the following places: Farnworth, near Bolton; New Brighton; Waterloo, Liverpool; Birkdale; Matlock Bridge and Bath; Douglas, Isle of Man; Withington, Manchester; and Christchurch, Hants. Mr. Spurgeon is the treasurer.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

IN "The Sword and the Trowel" for October, 1866, Mr. Spurgeon made an important announcement. It was to the effect that a venerable lady, the widow of a clergyman of the Church of England, and who was then in fellowship with "the brethren," was desirous of devoting £20,000 of her property for the founding and support of an Orphanage for boys. This was no scheme of his own, but a work distinctly entrusted to him by a kind Providence, and committed to his hand by the lady who acted as the Lord's almoner. The wish and prayer of Mrs. Hillyard was that, through the Orphanage, boys might by divine grace be converted, and become ministers and missionaries. This excellent lady was personally unknown to Mr. Spurgeon, but had been a reader of his sermons, and had perfect confidence in his wisdom and uprightness. The deacons of the Tabernacle at once consented to become co-trustees with their pastor, and a trust-deed and scheme were at once prepared, to give effect to the donor's wishes.

In January, 1867, two and a half acres of ground in Stockwell, abutting on the Clapham Road, were purchased, and building would have been proceeded with at once, but that a monetary panic having occurred, the trustees were unable to realize the securities, consisting chiefly of railway debentures, which had been handed over to them. They could not even pay for the ground without raising a loan, which they were very unwilling to do, as it might prove a bad omen. "The esteemed sister," says Mr. Spurgeon, "who had so freely given of her substance, had invested it very prudently, and it was impossible to foresee the peculiar state of the money market which locked up all our funds; but it was wisely ordered, for the circumstance has been fraught with great results to the Orphanage, since it has compelled us to retain a larger endowment fund than we might otherwise have possessed, if, indeed, we had thought of having any at all." We still quote from Mr. Spurgeon: —

"The scheme of the Orphanage proposed *to do away with all voting and canvassing*, with the wasteful expenditure necessitated thereby, and also *to form the orphans into large families*, instead of massing them together on the workhouse system. This last idea was convenient for the raising of money, for it enabled us to propose that individual donors should each give the amount to build a house, and at the same time we appealed to the Christian public for the means to pay for the land and the buildings

which would be needed for the common use of the orphans, such as dining-hall, school-rooms, &c. We carried this matter before God in prayer, and looked up; and we beg the reader to follow the entries, and mark the goodness of God."

"June, 1867. The Lord is beginning to appear for us in the matter of the Orphanage; but as yet he has not opened the windows of heaven as we desire and expect. We wait in faith and prayer. We need no less than £10,000 to erect the buildings, *and it will come*."

Mr. George Moore sent £250. Three friends offered £50 each, in hope that seventeen others would do the same. It pleased God, however, to try His servant's faith. With no object in view but the glory of God by the instruction of fatherless boys (the Orphanage was confined to boys at first) in the ways of the Lord, having a special view to their souls' salvation, he hoped that many of the Lord's people would at once have seen the usefulness and practical character of the enterprise, and have sent substantial aid immediately.

"The Lord's way, however, is the best," says Mr. Spurgeon, "and we rejoice in it, let it be what it may; if the work is to be one of time and long effort, so let it be, if thereby God's name is magnified."

Mr. Spurgeon adds: "We have engaged a sister to receive the first four orphans into her own hired

house until the orphan houses are ready. Our beloved friend, the original donor, has given her plate to be sold for this object, and in doing so has set an example to all believers who have surplus silver which ought to be put to better use than lying wrapped up in a box."

In August, 1867, Mr. Spurgeon writes: "Let the facts which with deep gratitude we record this month strengthen the faith of believers. In answer to many fervent prayers, the Lord has moved His people to send us, during the last month, in different amounts, towards the general funds of the Orphanage, the sum of £1,075, for which we give thanks unto His name. More especially do we see the gracious hand of God in the following incidents: —

"A lady, who has often aided us in the work of the College, having been spared to see the twenty-fifth anniversary of her marriage-day, her beloved husband presented her with £500 as a token of his ever-growing love to her. Our sister has called upon us, and dedicated the £500 to the building of one of the houses, to be called The Silver Wedding House. The Lord had, however, another substantial gift in store, to encourage us in our work; for, a day or two ago, a brother beloved in the Lord called upon us on certain business, and when he had retired he left in a sealed envelope the sum of £600, which is to be expended in erecting another house. This donation was as little expected as the first, except

that our faith expects that all our needs will be supplied in the Lord's own way. The next day, when preaching in the open air, an unknown sister put an envelope into my hand, enclosing £20 for the College and £20 for the Orphanage."

Later on, Mr. William Higgs, of the Crown Works, South Lambeth, and his workmen, promised to build a house; and Mr. Thomas Olney and his sons agreed to erect another in memory of Mrs. Unity Olney, deceased. The first stones of four houses were laid by Mr. Spurgeon, Mrs. Hillyard, Mr. W. Higgs, and Mr. Thomas Olney. At the close of the day £2,200 had been brought in, so that the land had been purchased and four houses provided for without touching Mrs. Hillyard's gift.

In January, 1868, Mr. Spurgeon reported that the noble sum of £1,000 had been brought by an unknown gentleman towards the erection of two other houses. In March he reports £2,000 from "A. B.," an unknown friend, and remarks, "We call upon all our friends to magnify the Lord for this amazing instance of His care. How base a thing is unbelief, and how largely does the Lord honor His servants' faith! The note which attended this munificent gift proves it to be from the same donor who gave £1,000 a few weeks ago. We have feared that the Orphanage might impoverish the College; see, dear readers, how graciously the Lord rebukes this unbelieving fear!" Here is the letter: —

My Dear Sir, — You will remember my intention to send a donation to your College. I have this day dropped into your letter-box an envelope containing two bank notes (£2,000), one of which is for the College, and the remaining £1,000 to help complete the Orphanage. The latter led me to contribute to the former. I am a stranger to you, but not to your sermons (printed). May the Lord give you health and strength many years to preach His Word and carry on His work!

A. B.

In June of the same year, the Baptist churches of England presented £1,200, afterwards made up to £1,765, to Mr. Spurgeon, for the Orphanage, as a testimonial, accompanied by a beautifully illuminated memorial.

The superintendent of the Tabernacle Sunday-school engaged, on behalf of the teachers and scholars, to raise the money to pay for a *Sunday-school House*. The zeal of the former and then present students accomplished the feat of raising funds for a *Pastors' College House*. The request of those who raised funds for this, — that Mrs. Spurgeon should lay the first stone, — the long-afflicted lady was enabled to comply with, to the great joy of all, and not least her beloved husband. After the stone-laying was over, twenty-six sweet little girls in white advanced one by one, and presented Mrs. Spurgeon with purses containing donations, which their parents had subscribed as a token of their affectionate rejoicing at her presence in their midst.

Thus, by the end of 1869 all the buildings were

finished, at a cost of £10,200, *and were entirely free from debt.* Since this an infirmary, bath, and laundry have been added, and two of the houses raised another story; yet all this outlay was speedily covered by the bounteous hand of the All-provider.

Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, and Rev. J. P. Chown, then of Bradford, with their liberal-hearted people, raised large sums for the Orphanage. Mr. Brown's people sent £450 for this object.

In March, 1875, the funds of the Orphanage were very low. "When the tide has quite ebbed out, the flood will return," says Mr. Spurgeon. "Our boys persist in eating, and wearing out their clothes, or we would not mention the matter of failing funds; but appetites are stubborn things, and our boys have double-barrelled ones." In the following September Mr. Spurgeon wrote: —

"We have this month received the largest amount, save one, ever entrusted to us at one time, namely, £10,000; half of it is for the Orphanage, and will be invested according to our general rule with legacies, unless our daily needs should compel us to draw upon it."

Two months later he wrote: "This month we have had many generous helps, but one of them has charmed us beyond measure. The good friends at Reading have held a bazaar for our Orphanage, and the net result is £1,158! We never dreamed of such a thing, and can hardly realize it now. This is

royal munificence, surpassing anything done for us by any town in England. We bless the name of the Lord, and take courage."

The Orphanages, as they now stand, are architecturally attractive; and though no money has been thrown away on mere ornamentation, the buildings, taken severally or collectively, are quite worthy to be compared with similar erections both at home and abroad. Elegance and utility are happily blended.

ENTRANCE TO STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

Entering by the arch at the end of the long carriage drive, you see a large open square, gracefully laid out and planted, the various buildings filling all sides of the square. On the pillar to the right of

the entrance arch are to be seen *the Sword and the Trowel*, the emblems of conflict with sin, and labor for the Lord, which gave the title to Mr. Spurgeon's Magazine, twenty-seven years ago; and on the left, the precious promise, "*The Lord will provide;*" while on the inner sides of the first two piers is the text, "*My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*" When standing under the marble archway we read the soul-strengthening text, so full of promise of help: "*A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows is God in His holy habitation;*" and on the piers facing the Orphanage grounds are the following inscriptions: "*Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these,*" and, "*Your Heavenly Father feedeth them.*"

Up to 1879, the Orphanage was confined to boys. But Mr. Spurgeon did not forget the girls, nor did

Mr. Spurgeon's God; and those who imitate Him in giving to the poor also remembered them. In "The Sword and the Trowel" for June in the above-named year, appeared the following announcement: —

"We have received from the foundress of the Stockwell Orphanage, £50 towards a Girls' Orphanage, to which we have added another £50, and Mr. Galpin £50, besides two promises of £25 each. *At the fête on June 19th, there will be a sale of goods on behalf of the Girls' Orphanage.* There will be no pressing of this matter, for we have a firm belief

THE BOYS' SIDE OF THE ORPHANAGE.

that it will grow of itself, till we shall have sufficient funds to be able to move in it."

A month later Mr. Spurgeon reports the annual fête, and adds: "The announcement that we are enabled to go on with the Girls' Orphanage, under our present trust-deed, was received with great applause, which was repeated when we announced

that we had already made a beginning by purchasing for £4,000 the adjacent house and grounds, called 'The Hawthorns.' Towards this amount we had received up to the 20th of June, in addition to the profits of Bazaar, £309 16s. 2d., together with £200 towards a house to be called 'The Deacons' House.' We have also promises of £25 from one friend; £50 from another; £500 for one of the houses for girls, from a friend; £500 from a firm for another house; and £25 worth of painting and glazing, when it is needed. We shall be glad if the Lord inclines His stewards to send the rest of the £4,000 before the purchase-money has to be paid, which must be done on July 15th; but in any case we leave the matter in His hands, knowing that all will be well. Without more than £550 specially given or promised for this object, it is rather daring to hope for the rest in a fortnight, but our Provider is a God of great resources."

A month later Mr. Spurgeon notes that "up to the moment of writing we have received towards the purchase-money of 'The Hawthorns,' £2,206 8s. 6d. In addition to this, we have promises of £50 and £25 for the same purpose; and a notice has been sent to us that a poor widow, who recently died, had bequeathed nineteen guineas to the Girls' Orphanage, and a similar amount to the Boys.' This will make a total of £2,301 7s. 6d. towards the £4,000 required for the house and grounds. We have also the

promise of *six houses* when we are ready to build; a freight of bricks from Sittingbourne, and some gas-fittings from Cheltenham. After we have paid for the ground we hope to take some girls into the house, and this will involve the furnishing of it, for which we have no means as yet."

Wondrously does God work with and on behalf of His servants, whom he has called to work for Him. In September, Mr. Spurgeon writes: —

THE GIRLS' SIDE OF THE ORPHANAGE.

"Once more we have to admire the loving-kindness of our faithful and blessed God for having marvellously supplied the wants of the work to which He has called us. Our friends know that we bought a house and grounds called 'The Hawthorns,' for £4,000. This we needed to pay for. For various reasons the payment of the purchase-money for 'The Hawthorns' was delayed until July 30th, and *on*

that very morning we received a letter telling us that a gentleman had died, and left £1,500 for the Girls' Orphanage, thus bringing up our total to within a very small sum of the amount required. The whole £4,000 is now all secured, including this legacy, and the property is our own. . . . Heartily do we endorse the expression of the friend who sent us the good news, 'The Lord has wonderful ways of using people to get together means for His work.' The story of that legacy and of other gifts is a remarkable one, and may some of these days be told. It illustrates the wisdom and faithfulness of the Lord, and tends greatly to strengthen our faith."

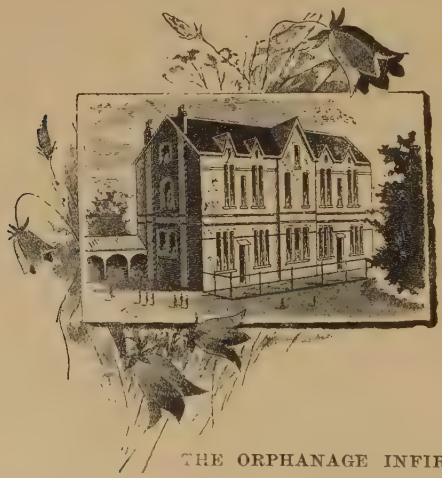
Lower down in the same note he adds:—

"We have now the promise of *seven houses* when we are ready to commence the new buildings. 'What hath God wrought!' School-rooms must be built, and an infirmary, so that there is still an opportunity for large donors to take a portion of the work, and finish it outright."

In 1880, after the annual fête in June, Mr. Spurgeon had to report great progress in the Girls' Orphanage enterprise. Up to the time that all the buildings were completed, he had kept the building fund separate from the general fund. It must be remembered that, while he was pleading for and expecting the money to complete the building of the Girls' Orphanage, he was still needing daily supplies for the boys' department. Might not friends,

in their warm zeal for the cause of the girls, overlook the older portion of the institution? If they did, God did not, and "The Lord will provide," was again and again fulfilled, as it ever has been.

"Up to the 14th June the general contributions to the Girls' Orphanage amounted to £976 4s. 1d., in addition to the other sums previously acknowledged,



THE ORPHANAGE INFIRMARY.

namely: H. E. S. £500, and the Deacons £310, making a total of £1,786 4s. 1d. Our list of promises now stands: C. H. Spurgeon, £500; Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, £500; H. E. S., a second £500; Samuel Barrow, Esq., £600; the Deacons, £690; W. R. Rickett, Esq., £1,000; so that, up to the time of writing, we see our way to more than £5,500 of the £11,000, which is the lowest contract for the

first block of buildings. When the tenders were opened, we found that our estimate of £8,000 was short of the mark, and therefore we arranged to leave for six months the erection of the houses at each end, so that we might engage to spend only £8,000. After waiting thus, however, funds came in so encouragingly that it was resolved to complete the whole of the then present plan at once."

In October, when the foundation stones were to be laid, it pleased God to prostrate the beloved President with great pain and excessive weakness. And yet how cheerfully he wrote from his sick bed! The Baptist Union held its autumnal session in London, and the foundation stones of two of the houses were then laid.

"Heartily," said Mr. Spurgeon, "do we welcome the Baptist Union to spend its autumnal session in London. May the Lord be in the midst of all its assemblies! The first engagement of the Union is to visit the Stockwell Orphanage. It was most kind of the committee so to arrange."

On Monday, 4th October, at 2.30, Mr. George Palmer, M.P., laid the memorial stone of The Reading House. Reading had led the way in constant kindness to the Orphanage; the pastor of King's Road Church, the late Mr. Anderson, had been foremost in aiding the work, and the great firms of the town, the Palmers and the Suttons, had been ex-

ceedingly hearty in the cause of the orphan. The late Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, laid the memorial stone of The Liverpool House.

Gradually the entire establishment was completed, and every claim met as it became due.

MR. SPURGEON AMID THE BOYS AT THE ORPHANAGE.

The above is necessarily an imperfect representation of a scene in the Boys' Play-hall, when Mr.

Spurgeon visited the Orphanage with an artist, for the purpose of taking sketches, in September, 1890. A terrific storm coming on, Mr. S. took refuge in the Play-hall. A chair was procured, and the boys swarmed around him, when he talked to them of the blessedness of simple trust in God, and the perfect peace which follows. He prayed, and they sang hymns, amid the booming thunder and the blazing lightning; and a profound impression seemed to have been made on many. Mr. Spurgeon wrote a description of the incident under the title of "A Happy Scene in a Storm." It is published as No. 15 of the "Stockwell Orphanage Tracts."

For fuller details we must refer the reader to the Annual Reports, merely adding that the Orphanage opens its doors to the full extent of its capability to the most necessitous orphans, without restriction to any denomination. By far the largest number are the children of members of the Church of England; Baptists come next, then other denominations, including Romanists, and also those of no denomination. It is a grand sight to see the five hundred boys and girls on fête days, and the thousands of people who assemble then to do honor to the President on his birthday, and to show sympathy with him in this blessed and Christlike work. You can seldom see anywhere so many happy faces; but among all, there is no one who is more full of joy and gladness than Mr. Spurgeon himself;

and no one could make him more glad with any earthly gift than with a donation, whether large or small, for the Stockwell Orphanage. And now that he has been (while we write) so many weeks on the verge of the grave, the present writer may be pardoned for saying that it has been Mr. Spurgeon's wish to see, before he ends his life and his labors, the Endowment Fund of the Orphanage made sufficiently ample for all future requirements.

Here may be the most fitting place to introduce some remarks and observations of the late great American Temperance lecturer, John B. Gough.

In "Sunlight and Shadow; or, Gleanings from my Life Work,"[1] Mr. Gough relates some interesting incidents concerning Mr. Spurgeon. Having related several anecdotes, and refuted many of the foolish stories current concerning him, he says: —

"I think these anecdotes show that he is one of the most natural of men, with no false pride or starch about him. He says just what he thinks, in the most natural and homely manner. He is a troublesome customer to pompous people, who fancy themselves somebodies when they are nothing of the kind.

"The strangest stories have been in circulation with regard to his drinking. I am glad to be able

[1] A work brimful of facts, anecdotes, and scenes pathetic and painful, with reference to Mr. Gough's life and Temperance work. Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

to say that I know he is at present, and has been for some time, a total abstainer; and that when he took stimulants it was by his physician's prescription. When he took them, he made no secret of his course, but freely spoke of it, wherever he might be.

"Personally, he is fascinating. He may not be called prepossessing; but there is nothing finical about him, nor the shadow of a sham. Some one has said, 'His face is heavy;' but when illuminated by a smile, it is beautiful. His first greeting captured me. I think the few hours spent with him were as delightful and profitable as any in my life. He is full of genial humor. His laugh is infectious. Yet with all his wit and fun, with the keenest faculty of seeing the ludicrous side of things, there is no unbecoming levity. It would not shock you if after a hearty laugh he should say, 'Let us have a word of prayer.'

"I would like to give you one incident to illustrate the man in his greatness and simplicity. He wished me to visit his Boys' Orphanage at Stockwell. I could go only on Saturday, and his note to me was characteristic: —

"'Beloved Friend, — Although I never go out on Saturdays, my horses, being under the law and not under grace, keep the seventh day Sabbath, yet we will arrange to visit,' etc.

"A beautiful day it was, for London, as we rode together chatting all the way. . . . When we entered

the grounds the boys set up a shout of joy at the sight of their benefactor.

"I asked, 'What are the requirements for admission?'

"He said, 'Utter destitution. Nothing denominational. We have more of the Church of England than the Baptists. We have Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists — all sorts.'

"After the boys had gone through their gymnastic drill, I spoke a few words to them. Mr. Spurgeon was like a great boy among boys.

"He said, 'There are two hundred and forty boys[1] — only think! How many pence are there in a shilling?'

"'Twelve.'

"'Right. How many shillings in a pound?'

"'Twenty.'

"'Right. Twelve times twenty, how many?'

"'Two hundred and forty.

"'That's a penny a piece for each boy. Here, Mr. Charlesworth,' handing him a sovereign, 'give these boys a penny a piece;' when a shrill, hearty hurrah was given as Mr. Spurgeon turned away with a laugh of keen enjoyment.

"'Will you go to the infirmary?' said he. 'We have an infirmary and quarantine; for sometimes the poor creatures we take in need a good deal of purifying. We have one boy very ill with consumption; he

[1] The Girls' Orphanage had not then been instituted.

cannot live, and I wish to see him, for he would be disappointed if he knew I had been here and had not seen him.'

"We went into the cool and sweet chamber, and there lay the boy. He was very much excited when he saw Mr. Spurgeon. The great preacher sat by his side, and I cannot (fitly) describe the scene. Holding the boy's hand in his, he said: —

"'Well, my dear boy, you have some precious promises all round the room. Now, dear child, you are going to die, and you are very tired lying here, and soon you will be free from all pain, and you will be at rest. Nurse, did he rest last night?'

"'He coughed very much.'

"'Ah, my dear boy, it seems hard for you to be here all day in pain, and to cough all night. Do you love Jesus?'

"'Yes.'

"'Jesus loves you. He bought you with His precious blood, and He knows what is best for you. It seems hard for you to be here and listen to the shouts of the healthy boys outside at play. But soon Jesus will take you home, and then He will tell you the reason, and you will be so glad.'

"Then, laying his hand on the boy, without the formality of kneeling, he said, 'O Jesus, Master, this dear child is reaching out his thin hand to find Thine! Touch him, dear Saviour, with Thy living, warm clasp. Lift him as he passes the cold river,

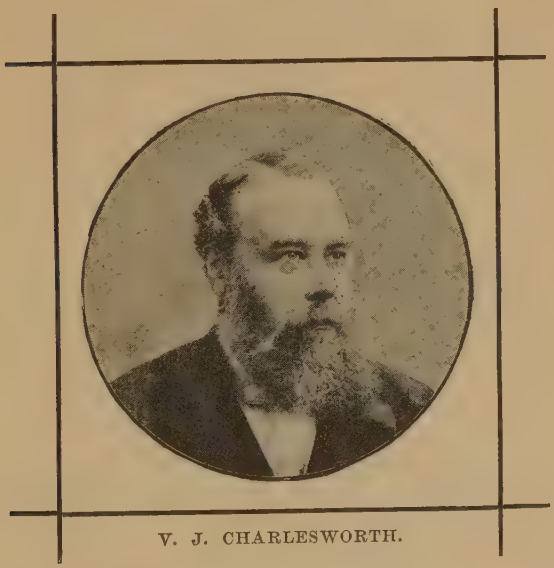
that his feet be not chilled by the water of death; take him home in Thine own good time. Comfort and cherish him till that good time comes. Show him Thyself as he lies here, and let him see Thee and know Thee more and more as his loving Saviour.'

"After a moment's pause he said, 'Now, dear boy, is there anything you would like? Would you like a canary in a cage to hear him sing in the morning? Nurse, see that he has a canary to-morrow morning. Good-by, my dear boy; you will see the Saviour, perhaps, before I shall!'

"I had seen Mr. Spurgeon holding by his power sixty-five hundred people in breathless interest; I knew him as a great man universally esteemed and beloved; but as he sat by the bedside of a dying child, whom his beneficence had rescued, he was to me a greater and a grander man than when swaying the mighty multitude at his will."

Our sketch of the Stockwell Orphanage would not be complete without referring to Mr. Charlesworth, the Head Master. He is a man widely known, and much appreciated and esteemed, not only by the President, the Vice-President, and the Trustees, but by all who know him, and especially know his solid worth. For some years he was co-pastor with Rev. Newman Hall, when the congregation now assembling at Christ Church met at Surrey Chapel, where Rev. James Sherman so ably ministered, and where its founder, Rev. Rowland Hill, conducted, as one of its

chief centres, his successful ministry. Soon after Mr. Charlesworth became a Baptist, the post, which he has so long and so satisfactorily filled, became vacant; and Mr. Spurgeon was guided to Mr. Charles-



V. J. CHARLESWORTH.

worth by that kind Providence whose guidance he so trustfully seeks, and so faithfully follows. He is in the prime of life; and all who know him will unite in the prayer that he may be long spared to discharge the duties for which he is in every way so well fitted.

CHAPTER XV.

MRS. SPURGEON'S BOOK FUND.

IT is commonly known that Mrs. Spurgeon has been for many years a great invalid. More than twenty years ago her life was despaired of; but God, if He has not restored her to health, has preserved her life, and made that life from year to year more valuable to the church and to the world. Her visit to Mentone with her husband, after his long illness, gives hope that she may yet recover complete health and strength. For a long time she has been unable to take any part in public Christian work, or to attend a service at the Tabernacle; but God has found her much-needed occupation at home.

No life of Mr. Spurgeon could possibly be complete if it did not include at least some reference to the "Book Fund." We cannot introduce this subject better than by giving Mr. Spurgeon's own introduction to his dear wife's description of the beginning of her work for poor pastors: —

"The beloved writer, with profound reverence for our editorial authority, placed this paper in our hand with a great deal of diffidence, and coaxingly entreated

MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

us to alter and amend it, and make it presentable. It is not in our heart to touch a word of it; we could not improve it, and we do not want to partake in the honor of it. Every line cost the suffering writer pain, and gave her joy, and it shall speak for itself. We cannot, dare not alter it."

"All last winter, in the sunniest corner of the south window of our especial sanctum, there stood a common garden flowerpot, containing a little plant, which we deemed a marvel of grace and beauty. We had sown some lemon-pips the preceding autumn, with a lively hope that one or more of them might possess the wonderful life-germ, and we were well rewarded for our confidence. In due time a frail little stem, and two of the tiniest leaves that ever coaxed their way through the dark mould, made their appearance, and from that moment it was watched, and watered, and tended with assiduous care. So frail at first, and delicate, that a drop of dew would have overwhelmed it, it nevertheless soon gained courage, the tender stem strengthened, one by one other and larger leaves unfolded themselves, and the little plant stood perfect and complete. It was a very little thing, but it gave great pleasure, and though some of the younger members of the household would occasionally ask, with just a suspicion of sarcasm in their tone, 'if there were any lemons yet?' we cherished our little plant even more lovingly, and

thanked God who, with infinite tenderness towards His suffering children, often deepens and intensifies their enjoyment of His daily mercies, throwing a special charm around their comforts, and causing a leaf, a flower, or the song of a bird, to whisper sweet 'comfortable thoughts' in their hearts.

"But this winter our Heavenly Father has given us a better plant to care for. The little tree of the "Book Fund" sprang from as small a beginning as the lemon-plant itself, and we fondly hope it is as surely a creation of the Lord's hand. Great was the loving-kindness which brought this plant into our sick chamber, and gave us the loving commission 'to dress and to keep it.' With what joy we received the charge, and how happy the words made us, words fail us to tell; but since the little tree has grown rapidly under the shadow of the Lord's blessing, we thought our friends would be interested to know how much and what manner of fruit it bears.

"At first we intended only to distribute one hundred copies of Mr. Spurgeon's 'Lectures to my Students;' but we received so many kind donations

from friends who sympathized with our wishes that we soon became ambitious, and without discontinuing the distribution of 'Lectures,' we longed to supply needy ministers with the precious volumes of 'The Treasury of David,' 'Sermons,' etc. This we have been enabled to do, and the work goes on daily. Without any solicitation, friends have sent in £180, and though our dear Mr. Editor thinks they might not like their names to be published, yet, if he should one day change his mind, they are all ready for him, faithfully registered. We keep also a strict debtor and creditor account. Better still, the Lord's 'Book of Remembrance' is open, and therein, assuredly, the names of all those who aid His toiling servants will be recorded."

Up to December, 1875, Mrs. Spurgeon had distributed —

49 sets of "The Treasury of David" (4 vols. each).
124 volumes of "Treasury" to complete sets.
167 volumes of "Sermons" to those already possessing "Treasury."
100 volumes of Dr. Fish's "Handbook of Revivals."
4 copies of "The Interpreter;" and a few of Mr. Spurgeon's lesser works.

How greatly such gifts are needed by ministers of all denominations, and how thoroughly they are appreciated, will be seen from the following extracts from letters. The work increases year by year. From the first it has not been restricted to Pastors' College students, or even to Baptists, or Noncon-

formists, but has included large numbers of needy clergymen of the Church of England. The letters often express appreciation, not only of Mr. Spurgeon's writings, but, better still, of the glorious doctrines of grace which he delights to preach.

A pastor with a salary of £80 a year writes thus:

"Your great gift to me came safely to hand this morning. I cannot command language that will adequately convey to you the thanks I desire to offer. You will believe me when I say that the gift, and the way in which it came to me, thoroughly broke me down, and tears of joy flowed freely."

Another says:—

"I beg to acknowledge, with ten thousand thanks, the receipt of the precious 'Treasury of David.' I have long sighed for these volumes, but they were out of my reach. I cannot tell you with what delight I receive them."

Still another writes:—

"My salary is £60 a year. I have a wife and family. You will be able to conceive my feelings (on receiving four vols. of 'The Treasury of David') when I tell you that these are the only new books I have had for three years past."

Yet another says:—

"Through the illness of my dear wife, . . . I have been unable to add a single book to my very, very small stock for the last two years; therefore any present of a book is most thankfully accepted. . . .

May the Lord raise up many more friends, so that you may be able to help poor ministers yet more and more!"

These are a few out of a selection quoted by Mrs. Spurgeon, who says, respecting her own joy in this needful and blessed work: —

"Perhaps my dear Mr. Editor will accord me the privilege of laying aside for a moment that formal and perplexing 'we,' and allow me to say how deeply I am personally indebted to the dear friends who have furnished me with the means of making others happy. For me there has been a *double* blessing. I have been both recipient and donor, and in such a case as this it is hard to say which is the 'more blessed.' My days have been made indescribably bright and happy by the delightful duties connected with the work and its little arrangements, and so many loving messages have come to me in letters, such kind words, such hearty good wishes, such earnest, fervent prayers have surrounded me, that I seem to be living in an atmosphere of blessing and love, and can truly say with the Psalmist, 'my cup runneth over.' So, with a heart full of gratitude to God, and deep thankfulness to my dear friends, I bid them for the present a loving farewell.

"Susie Spurgeon."

The applications for books continued to grow month by month, and year by year. In the No-

vember number of "The Sword and the Trowel," 1879, Mr. Spurgeon himself puts in a word for the Fund, and records a special interposition of the Lord in a time of great need. He says: —

"The needful work of supplying ministers with books proceeds with great regularity, and considerable numbers of curates and poor ministers of the Church of England, together with pastors of all denominations, apply for 'The Treasury of David' and other works. Could our readers see the letters of thanks, they would know how sharp is the book-hunger which gnaws the soul of many a preacher of the Word. We have said very little of late about this work, which is carried on by our beloved. Only a few friends have thought of the Fund of late, and yet, hitherto, there has been no lack. The Fund personified might almost say, 'I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me.' Note the following fact, and let the Lord be glorified by the rehearsal of it.

"A friend of ours, who is always a princely giver, told us, on the night of Mr. Gough's lecture, that he would call at Nightingale Lane the next day. Knowing his great business and our own, we half declined the offer, though we are always glad to see him. But he said he would come, and come he did. His errand was to give £100 to the Book Fund. Now, reader, mark this. Mrs. Spurgeon's quarter's bill for books came in that very Saturday evening;

and had not that friend insisted on coming down and bringing the £100, our dear one would have been £60 in debt. She would have been almost heart-broken had this been the case; for she had prayed for help, and expected it. The Lord would not let her have the trial, but sent His steward at the very hour, though he knew nothing of the need. We were both filled with adoring thankfulness for this memorable interposition. It was not the first time in which we have together adored the Lord in an amazement of gratitude, nor will it be the last. Thus by one and another the Lord has filled up the reservoir which supplies so many of his poor ministers with refreshment: and He will do it again."

In the Magazine for the following month, Mr. Spurgeon says: —

"Mrs. Spurgeon has, for some time, been largely occupied with supplying books to clergymen of the Church of England, whose stipends are too small to allow them to purchase them. The amount of kindly feeling which has been expressed is very pleasing, and we regard this opportunity of spreading evangelical truth as a peculiarly valuable one, which should be largely used."

But our space is too limited to enlarge this chapter as we could, and should be greatly pleased to do. We must refer our readers to one of the daintiest of dainty volumes, entitled "Ten years of

my Life in the Service of the Book Fund," [1] and also to the subsequent Annual Reports, which are unlike Reports in general, alike for the exceedingly tasteful way in which they are got up, their very touching relations of ministerial privation and thankfulness, and the many tender and precious thoughts of the writer.

In speaking of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons and other works, in a subsequent chapter, we shall have to refer to the Report for 1890. But this may be the proper place to record the summary of the work of the Book Fund for 1890: —

Books distributed, 6,867 volumes.

This number included —

"Treasury of David"	1,305 vols.
Sermons	510 "
"The Hereafter," by the late JAMES FYFE (Conference present)	400 "
"Lectures to my students"	668 "
"My Sermon-Notes"	488 "
Watson's "Body of Divinity"	76 "
Selected Sermons on "Soul-Winning," &c.	498 "
Smaller Works of Mr. Spurgeon	898 "
Gifts of Books from friends	1,134 "

besides smaller quantities of other valuable works.

During the fifteen years of the existence of the Book Fund no less than 122,129 volumes have been distributed. In 1890 the distribution was to four hundred and eighty-four recipients, as follows: —

[1] "Ten Years of my Life in the Service of the Book Fund." By Mrs. C. H. SPURGEON. Price 3s. 6d., and 5s. Passmore & Alabaster.

119 Baptists, 76 Independents, 100 Methodists, 122 clergymen, 7 Presbyterians, 48 missionaries, 1 Lutheran, and 2 Moravians.

In a kind of sub-preface to this Report Mr. Spurgeon gives the following charming parable: "I saw in my dream," says the writer, "a man worn and weary with working the handle of a pump from which no water came. Hard by was his garden, and all the plants and flowers were pining for water; but he had none to give them. Then I saw a woman

coming towards him, bearing a pitcher of water. She stopped and spoke cheeringly to the weary one; and anon she smilingly poured the contents of her pitcher down the pump, and immediately it began to work, and pour forth waters of its own. How the husbandman blessed her!

"I think I know that woman; and sure I am that often the reading of a new book, sent from the Book Fund, enables a mind to work with success, which previously had been exhausted by labor in vain in the Lord."

Clergymen of the Church of England, as we have seen, come in for the largest share of the Book Fund gifts. They are not behind the rest of the recipients in the expression of their thankfulness.

A clergyman in the Midland counties writes: —

"So far as help in my pastoral work is concerned, I use Mr. Spurgeon's writings more than all others I possess. I look upon the rest of my books as a sort of reference library, but *his* volumes are always near at hand.

"Of course, as a Churchman, I occasionally find 'a hard nut to crack,' but I either crack it or pass it by; it does not interfere with the general profit I receive from his works. I have learned a good lesson also through my correspondence with you, for I have placed a 'seed-basket' beside my writing-desk, and I am dropping a grain in each letter as it leaves me.

"Wishing you God's blessing on your noble work.

"Yours faithfully,

"———."

A London curate writes thus: —

"Dear Mrs. Spurgeon, — The commonest gratitude would call for a letter of thanks from me, for your great kindness in sending me such useful books; but I feel uncommonly grateful, though it is difficult to testify to the fact. The note which you enclosed, presenting the books, I shall paste into the first volume of "The Treasury," and always be ready

to show it with thankfulness. I do pray for an increasing blessing on your Book Fund. There can scarcely be any agency at work more widely useful. Who can tell the sum of blessing issuing from those books through hundreds of ministers?

"Yours gratefully,

"_____."

From the centre of the country comes this warm and grateful letter: —

"DEAR MADAM, — Your extraordinary liberality, in the splendid gift of books to me, has completely taken me by surprise. I scarcely know what to say, nor how to express my thanks for your kind generosity. When I say, 'thank you,' believe me that I am expressing in the heartiest possible way my feeling of the deepest gratitude.

"I have to-day been indulging in reading one of the 'Lectures to Students.' Dear me, Mr. Spurgeon hits us Church clergy very, very hard; and I believe we deserve it. I do trust that, by studying the volumes you have sent, I may, with the blessing of God, catch some of the enthusiasm which fires your husband, — that I may be emboldened to go forth more fearlessly than heretofore, helping in the warfare against sin.

"Yours faithfully,

"_____."

Mrs. Spurgeon's "Annual Reports" are little literary gems, and there is no wonder that they are so

highly prized by her subscribers, and purchased so largely by the general public. In addition to full particulars of the Book Fund, they contain exquisite expositions of passages of Scripture, or parables and illustrations of various phases of spiritual experience. Twelve of these have been selected from the reports and issued by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster under the title of "Westwood Leaflets."[1] They have very deservedly had a large sale.

We close this chapter regretfully, because there is so much we would wish to say, so much we would like to quote, and, not least, so much that it would be only right to state as to the need of the work, the quiet, unobtrusive way in which it is conducted, and, more than all, the beautiful and truly Christian spirit of the much afflicted but much honored lady who, in the sweetest, tenderest, and most unaffectedly humble way, does the work of God's almoner towards some of the worthiest of the Master's many servants, respecting neither livery nor badge, name nor denomination. May the gracious Lord long spare her, and her beloved husband, to be a blessing to the weary workers, and to pour living water into the often dry pumps of jaded minds!

1 "Westwood Leaflets." By Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon.

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. SPURGEON'S JUBILEE.

THE approach of this interesting period in the life of their pastor drew forth alike the love, the energies, and the liberality of his numerous flock. It could not be other than a great occasion; and such it was in all respects. Two great meetings were held in the Tabernacle in connection with the celebration; the first on *Wednesday evening*, *June* 18*th*, 1884, and the second the following evening, the pastor's fiftieth birthday. Over the former meeting Mr. Spurgeon presided. The proceedings commenced with the singing of the hymn commencing —

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!"

Mr. Spurgeon then proceeded to say: —

"My one deep anxiety and prayer has been that every part of the proceedings of these two days should be to the glory of God. It would be deeply to my grief, as long as ever I lived, if there should be anything said or done which should be contrary to the mind of our Lord. We meet together, with congratulations very hearty and very loving. I cannot

tell you how hearty and how loving they have been already; but we want God's blessing, or we shall fall into evil rather than good. I want the brethren representing the deacons and the elders to pray very briefly, if they please, but I am sure very heartily, for God's blessing upon us now."

After these prayers, Mr. Spurgeon continued: —

"Now, dear friends, having thus sought the divine blessing, we expect to have it. I do not think anybody imagines that I ought to speak at any length to-night, but I should like to say very much in very little. I feel to-night overwhelmed with gratitude to you, and because of you, to God. I am sure I went home on Monday night feeling that I was buried in mercies, crushed beneath the weight of God's loving-kindness to me. I feel just so to-night; therefore I cannot speak much, especially after the kind things which many of you have said to me. I have much to do not to cry; indeed, I have had a little distillation of the eyes quietly, but I try to keep myself all right. I feel very much like weeping now, at the remembrance of all the good and gracious things that have been said to me this day. But let me say this for my speech: the blessing which I have had here for many years must be entirely attributed to the grace of God and the working of God's Holy Spirit among us. Let that stand as a matter not only taken for granted, but as felt and distinctly recognized among us.

"I hope, brethren, that none of you will say that I have kept back the glorious work of the Holy Spirit. I have tried to remind you of it whenever I have read a chapter, by praying that God the Holy Spirit would open up that chapter to our minds. I hope I have never preached without an entire dependence on the Holy Ghost. Our reliance upon prayer has been very conspicuous, — at least, I think so. We have not begun, we have not continued, we have not ended anything without prayer. We have been plunged into it up to the hilt. We have not prayed as we should, but still we have so prayed as to prevail; and we wish it to be on record that we owe our success as a church to the work of the Holy Spirit, principally through its leading us to pray. Neither as a church have we been without a full conviction that if we are honest in our asking we must be earnest in acting. It is no use asking God to give us a blessing if we do not mean it; and if we mean it we shall use all the means appointed for the gaining of that boon; and that we have done.

"One of my first duties to-night will be to remind this audience that it very largely consists of representatives from the various institutions. A partial list will be read to you, but, incomplete as it is, it is a long one; and though one or two of the institutions represented may be small ones, yet many of them are so large that they might have constituted public societies having annual meetings at Exeter

Hall; and these things have sprung out of this church through that same Holy Spirit who set us praying, and set us working. Next to that, it behooves me to say that I owe the prosperity I have had in preaching the gospel to the gospel which I have preached. I wish everybody thought as much; but there are some who will have it that there is something very particular and special about the preacher. Well, I believe there may be something particular about the man, something odd, perhaps. He cannot help that, but he begs to say there is nothing about him that can possibly account for the great and long-continued success attending his labors.

"Our American friends are generally very 'cute judges; and I have a good many times read their opinion of me, and they say, over and over again, 'Well, he is no orator. We have scores of better preachers than Mr. Spurgeon in America, but it is evident that he preaches the gospel as certain of our celebrated men do not preach it.' I so preach the gospel that people coming to hear it are impressed by it, and rejoice to rally to the standard. I have tried, and I think successfully, to saturate our dear friends with the doctrines of grace. I defy the devil himself ever to get that out of you if God the Holy Spirit once puts it into you. That grand doctrine of substitution, which is at the root of every other — you have heard it over and over and over again, and you have taken a sure grip of it. Never let it go. And I

wish to say to all preachers who fail in this matter that I wish they would preach more of Christ, and try to preach more plainly. Death to fine preaching! There is no good in it. All the glory of words and the wisdom of men will certainly come to nought; but the simple testimony of the good-will of God to men, and of His sovereign choice of His own people, will stand the test not only of the few years during which I have preached it, but of all the ages of this world till Christ shall come.

"I thank you, dear friends, for all your love and your kindness to me, but I do attribute even that in great measure to this fact; I do not believe that the dry, dead doctrine of some men could ever have evoked such sympathy in men's hearts as my gospel has aroused in yours. I cannot see anything about myself that you should love me; I confess I would not go across the street to hear myself preach. But I dare not say more upon that point because my wife is here. It is the only point upon which we decidedly differ; I differ *in toto* from her estimate of me, and from your estimate of me too, but yet I do not wish you to alter it. You remember the picture 'Punch' gave us of the man and his wife who had bought a teapot; they were æsthetic, and she said, 'Oh, what a teapot!' 'Yes,' said the husband, 'I do not know how we shall ever be able to live up to it.' That was their high ideal; but the model you set up for me, in your kindly estimate of me, is one which I

must labor to reach. Anything that stimulates us to do better cannot be a very bad thing; therefore I thank you with all my heart for your generous esteem."

Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary, Mr. J. W. Harrald, then read a list of societies represented at the meeting; after which Mr. Spurgeon said: "We have need to praise God that he enables the church to carry on all these institutions. Let us sing the hymn, 'Hallelujah for the Cross.'

"I want you now to hear me a moment while I say that the brother who is now about to speak, Mr. Moody, is one whom we all love. He is not only one whom we all love, but he is evidently one whom God loves. We feel devoutly grateful to Almighty God for raising him up, and for sending him to England to preach the gospel to such great numbers with such plainness and power. We shall continue to pray for him when he has gone home. Among the things we shall pray for will be that he may come back again. I might quote the language of an old Scotch song with regard to Prince Charlie —

> "'"Bonnie Moody's gaun awa,
> Will ye no come back again?
> Better loved ye canna be,
> Will ye no come back again?'"

Mr. D. L. Moody said: "Mr. Spurgeon told us that he has felt like weeping. I have tried to keep back the tears. I have not succeeded very well. I

remember, seventeen years ago, coming into this building a perfect stranger. Twenty-five years ago, after I was converted, I began to read of a young man preaching in London with great power, and a desire seized me to hear him, never expecting that some day I should be a preacher. Everything that I could get hold of in print that he ever said, I read. I knew very little about religious things when I was converted. I did not have what he has had — a praying father. My father died before I was four years old. I was thinking of that to-night as I saw Mr. Spurgeon's venerable father here by his side. He has the advantage of me in that respect, and he perhaps got an earlier start than he would have got if he had not had that praying father. His mother I have not met, his father I have ; but most good men have praying mothers — God bless them! In 1867 I made my way across the sea, and if ever there was a sea-sick man for fourteen days, I was that one. The first place to which I came was this building. I was told that I could not get in without a ticket, but I made up my mind to get in somehow, and I succeeded. I well remember seating myself in this gallery. I remember the very seat, and I should like to take it back to America with me. As your dear pastor walked down to the platform, my eyes just feasted upon him, and my heart's desire for years was at last accomplished. It happened to be the very year you preached in the Agricultural Hall. I fol-

lowed you up there, and you sent me back to America a better man. Then I went to try and preach myself, though at the time I little thought I should ever be able to do so. While I was here I followed Mr. Spurgeon everywhere, and when at home people asked me if I had gone to this and that cathedral I had to say 'No,' and confess I was ignorant of them; but I could tell them something about the meetings addressed by Mr. Spurgeon.

"In 1872 I thought I would come over again to learn a little more, and again I found my way back to this gallery. I have been here a great many times since, and I never come into the building without getting a blessing to my soul. I think I have had as great a one here to-night as at any other time I have been in this Tabernacle. When I look down on these orphan boys, when I think of the 600 servants of God who have gone out from the College to preach the gospel, of the 1,500 or 2,000 sermons from this pulpit that are in print, and of the multitude of books that have come from the pastor's pen, — Scripture says of the making of books there is no end, and in his case it is indeed true, — I would fain enlarge upon all these good works, but the clock shows me that, if I do, I shall not get to my other meeting in time. But let me just say this, — If God can use Mr. Spurgeon, why not the rest of us? and why should not we all just lay ourselves at the Master's feet, and say, 'Send me, use me'?

It is not Mr. Spurgeon, after all, it is God. He is as weak as any other man away from Him. Moses was nothing, but it was Moses' God. Sampson was nothing when he lost his strength, but when it came back to him, then he was a mighty man; and so, dear friends, bear in mind that if we can just link our weakness to God's strength, we can go forth and be a blessing in the world.

"Now, there are others to speak, and I have also to hasten away to another meeting, but I want to say to you, Mr. Spurgeon, 'God bless you.' I know that you love me, but I assure you I love you a thousand times more than you can ever love me, because you have been such a blessing to me, while I have been a very little blessing to you. When I think of a man or a woman who has been in this Tabernacle time after time, and heard the gospel, I pity them deep down in my heart if they are found among the lost. I have read your sermons for twenty-five years, and what has cheered my heart has been that in them was no uncertain sound. You are never going to die. John Wesley lives more to-day than when he was in the flesh; Whitefield lives more to-day than when he was on this earth; John Knox lives more to-day than at any period of his earthly life; and Martin Luther, who has been gone over 300 years, still lives. Bear in mind, friends, that our dear brother is to live forever. We may never meet together again in

the flesh, but by the blessing of God, I will meet you up yonder."

Mr. Chamberlain having sung the hymn beginning,

"Whoever receiveth the Crucified One,"

the late Mr. B. W. Carr, one of the deacons, read the following address to Mr. Spurgeon: —

To the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Pastor of the Church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

With a united voice of thanksgiving to our ever blessed God on your behalf; with a cordial acknowledgment of the good services you have rendered to the universal Church of our Lord Jesus Christ; and with a profound sense of the high character and wide reputation you have established among your fellow-Christians, we beg to offer our sincere congratulations on this the fiftieth anniversary of your birthday.

Accept our assurance that no language but the language of personal affection could fitly express the esteem in which you are held by ourselves and by the numerous constituency we represent. Were it possible for the lips of all those who love you as a brother, and those who revere you as a father in Christ, to sound in your ears the sentiments of their hearts, the music of their chorus at this glad hour would be like the noise of many waters.

Gathered together as we now are in this sacred edifice, — sacred not by reason of any superstitious ceremony at the opening, but by the soul-saving miracles of grace subsequently wrought beneath its roof, — it becomes us to greet you first as Pastor of this Ancient Church. More than thirty of those fifty years you chronicle to-day have been spent in our midst. As our Minister, you are known to the utmost ends of the earth. Richly endowed by the Spirit of God with wisdom and discretion, your conduct as our Ruling Elder has silenced contention and promoted harmony. The three hundred souls you found in fellowship at New Park Street Chapel have multiplied to a fellowship

of nearly six thousand in this Tabernacle. And under your watchful oversight the family group has increased without any breach of order.

You came to us in the freshness of your youth. At that flowering age when boys of good promise are wont to change their curriculum from school to college, you had already developed into manliness, and there was ripe fruit as well as pleasant foliage on your branches. The groundwork of your education appeared to be so solid, and the maturity of your character so thoroughly reliable, that you were unanimously elected by venerable members of the Church of Christ to preside over their councils. The fair prospect of your springtime has not suffered from any blight. Your natural abilities never betrayed you into indolent habits. The talents you possessed gave stimulus to your diligence. A little prosperity did not elate you, or a measure of success prompt the desire to settle down in some quiet resting-place. You spread your sails to catch the breeze. The ascendency you began to acquire over the popular mind, instead of making you vainglorious, filled you with awe, and increased the rigor of that discipline you have always exercised over yourself.

These were happy auguries of your good speed. Not that the utmost vigilance on your part could have sufficed to uphold you amidst the vast and accumulating responsibilities that have devolved on you as the sphere of your ministry widened. He who ruleth in the heavens has screened you in times of peril, and piloted you through shoals and quicksands, through straits and rapids. His grace and His goodness, His promises and His providence, have never failed you. From the hour when you first committed your soul, your circumstances, and your destinies to the keeping of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have never feared such a disaster. To your unwavering faith in His guardian care we venture to attribute the coolness of your head and the courage of your heart in all the great adventures of your life. Some of us have been with you from the beginning of your charge. Since then a generation has almost passed away. According to a law as legibly written as any law of nature, the

Scripture has said, "Instead of the fathers, shall be the children." Hence, in not a few instances, you must miss the sires while you meet the sons. The retrospect of your career, to those who have followed it throughout, appears like one unbroken series of successes; but as our memory retraces the steps you have taken, we can testify to the exhaustive labors in which you have blithely engaged, the constant self-denial you have cheerfully exercised, and the restless anxieties that have kept you and your comrades incessantly calling on the name of the Lord. By such an experience you have enlarged the field of evangelical enterprise in the various institutions of the church.

And it has been your happiness, not only to see the growth of those institutions beyond the most sanguine hopes you cherished when planting them, but to have received the grateful thanks of those who derived unspeakable benefit in partaking of their fruits. Such gratitude demands our notice, though only in the lowest degree. Your skilful generalship has laid ten thousand happy donors to your charities under lasting obligations to you for providing outlets for their benevolence. It has pleased the Lord to make whatever you do to prosper. You have been the faithful steward and the kindly executor of hundreds and thousands of pious individuals, whose fond design has been to lay up treasure for themselves in heaven by paying into the exchequer on earth of their substance, for the widow and the fatherless in their distress, for the poor and those who have no helper. Let the acknowledgments of subscribers to the various purses you hold in your hands, as well as those of recipients, cheer you as you enter on a fresh decade of the days of the years of your earthly pilgrimage.

An occasion like this is so solemn, and an address like the present is so serious, that we may well search the sacred volume for suitable words. We feel sure that brethren in all parts of the earth pray for you. And we are equally certain that the churches which are in Christ throughout the world glorify God in you. The Lord preserve and keep you to the end. To this hour you have maintained an unsullied reputation among men. Erring as we all are before God, it is our sincere conviction that if such

a thing were possible, a second edition of your life, revised by yourself, could hardly be an amendment.

You braved much calumny on the outset of your career, and you have outlived it. The secularists who once denounced now salute you. Where your theology has failed to convert them, your philanthropy has sufficed to enchant them. You are lifted in public esteem above suspicion, as a true man — no traitor or time-server. Your kindness to everybody has made everybody kind to you. You have illustrated the force and the fulness of a divine proverb which has puzzled many a philosopher: "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

If, dear sir, you give us full credit for the intense sympathy we have felt when sickness and sorrow have weakened your strength in the way, you will not deny us the gratification of alluding to the private and domestic joys that pour down like sunbeams on your face and gladden your Jubilee.

Your beloved and estimable wife, whose life long trembled in the balance, has been restored to health. Had she been less heroic and more exacting in her protracted illness, you must have been more reserved and less generous in the consecration of your time and thought to the good works you were doing. In the stillness of enforced retirement, her inventive genius discovered new channels of usefulness. Her "Book Fund" is beyond all praise. And her delicate mission has been so appreciated that throughout the British Isles, and in foreign lands, her name has become linked with your own at every station where an ambassador of Christ publishes the glad tidings of the gospel.

Your father and mother, walking before God in quiet, unpretentious piety, have both been spared to see their first-born son in the meridian of a career that has made their once obscure patronymic famous throughout the world.

Your worthy brother, and trusty yoke-fellow in the pastorate, is still by your side rendering good service, for which his fine business tact, and his manly but modest desire to second all your motions to go forward, eminently qualify him.

Your two sons have both devoted themselves to the ministry ; and each of them in his own sphere of labor has found proof that he was divinely anointed to his pastorate.

To yourself, however, we turn as a central figure, recognized from afar by tens of thousands of people, to whom your name is an emblem of purity and power, and by whom you are accounted second to none among living preachers ; and your sermons are appreciated as a faithful exposition of the gospel of God, instinct with the witness of the Holy Spirit, and therefore quickening in their influence on the consciences and the hearts of men.

On your head we now devoutly invoke those blessings which we believe the Almighty is abundantly willing to bestow.

May your steps in the future be ordered of the Lord, as they have been in the past. May a generation yet unborn witness that your old age is luxuriant and fruitful as your youth. May your life on earth wind up like the holy Psalter that you so much love. Be it yours to anchor at last in David's Psalm of Praise, prolific as it was of other Psalms, into which no groan or sigh could intrude. So may you rest in the Lord with a vision of the everlasting Kingdom dawning on your eyes, and Hallelujah after Hallelujah resounding in your ears.

At the close of this address Mr. Spurgeon said: "It is a very great mercy that I am not expected to speak after that. I cannot tell where Mr. Carr can have gathered all those thoughts concerning me. So far as this church and its institutions are truly the work of God — and I believe that the work of God has been done among us — so far those words should bring glory to his name ; and I am the happiest of the sons of men if I have laid any trophy at the foot of the cross. Now we are going to have a number of short speeches, and my

father's must, of course, come first. Nobody can say that I am old while I have so young a father, although I was 'old Spurgeon' when I was very young, and I hope I shall be young when I get very old."

Rev. John Spurgeon said: "My dear friends, they say all things work together for good. I have a very bad cold for one thing, and have nearly lost my voice, and that is a very good reason why I should not speak to-night, because you will not hear me if I attempt it. However, this young man here makes me think of my father. He was eighty-four years of age, and when we were out walking together he walked so fast that I lagged behind, and he said, 'Come on, boy; what makes you lag behind?' Charles is now a better man to walk than I am, but in ten years' time we shall see, if we live, who can walk the best. My father did all in his power to give me a good education, and advised me to make the best use of it; but I have never had the advantages enjoyed by some ministers, for, like Mr. Moody, I have gathered up my knowledge, comparatively speaking, as I went along. But I think I have done my fair share of preaching. I have preached five-and-forty years, and the Lord has blessed it. What do you think was the text of the first sermon I ever preached? Why, 'God is love!' and don't you think I could preach from it to-night? He has taken care of me all my life long. He gave me a

kind father and mother, who prayed very much for me, and their prayers were heard. And my son has had a praying father and mother, and his mother's prayers have been heard, and the Lord has taken care of him. What a mercy it was that that boy was converted when he was! And it was in consequence of his mother's prayers. My heart rejoices that I can say, 'God is love,' that He loved me, and gave Himself for me, and redeemed my soul from death. His love has made me happy, and He has indeed been a God of love to raise up two such sons as I have. My father had five sons, and they all had two sons each, and not one of their sons can preach; but my two boys can speak very well, and so can my son's two boys, God bless them! God bless this Church, the Orphanage, the College, and all the institutions! My dear son, I am very happy to see you so well to-night; God bless you!"

C. H. Spurgeon: "I may say that I did not originally choose him as my father; but if it had been left to my choice, no other should have filled his place. May God bless him in his latter days! And now comes my brother. If there is a good man on the earth, I think it is my brother. It is the providence of God, and an instance of the infinite kindness of God to me, that I should have such a helper as my brother. No man in this world has as good a brother as I have, or if he has, let him cry 'Hallelujah!'"

Pastor James A. Spurgeon: "In the address to my brother, we have not said half what we should like to say, and it would be quite impossible for us to say to-night all that is in our hearts concerning him. What can I possibly say about him as a brother? There is no one in the world that has so good a brother as I have. Ever since I can remember anything, I can remember my big brother, and I am quite content that he should remain my big brother to the end of our days. The esteem in which I have held him has only been equalled by the love I bear him. I always thought him wonderfully wise, but I never thought him so much so as I do to-day. He got the start of me, and he has kept it all along. I do not know that I have gained much on him, though I have tried to run him hard. I have always seen him well in front in every good word and work for the Master, and I have tried to keep as close to him as I could all my life long, and I bless God that we are here to-day as brothers. Looking back, I can see that both of us have been children of many prayers; and all honor to my father and his father, to my mother and to our good grandmother, for we came of a praying stock, and we came of a pious stock for generations past.

"I think it was in the year 1662 that Job Spurgeon sat a winter through, in prison, in a chair, because he would not go to the steeple-house to worship. He was so afflicted with rheumatism (which the major

part of our family inherits) that he could not lie down; so that my dear brother's infirmities are venerable because of their age. With other things he has inherited much weakness; but it was gained in the Master's service, and because one of our ancestors would not submit to worship God in any other way than that which he thought right. I thank God to-night for being my brother's coadjutor.

"I consider it to be the greatest honor God could have conferred upon me to make me co-partner in my brother's work. Anything I can do for him makes me feel that I am multiplying him; and at the same time I feel that I am multiplying myself to a degree which it would have been utterly impossible for me to have done if I had not been linked to my brother. Co-partnerships do not always answer, but be it understood that our co-partnership certainly has answered. A grander leader no man could possibly desire. You who follow him know how nobly he leads us forward.

"Now, be it known, that the secret of my brother's success, so far as I have solved it, is prayer. I do not know any man more pre-eminent in prayer than my brother, and he who prays like my brother prays may look for a like success. I do not know any man who is more profoundly filled with faith in his God, in the gospel that he preaches, and in the comrades that God has sent to his side, than is my brother. I do not know any man who is more full of singleness

of eye in connection with his work than my brother is. It is said that no man is a hero to his valet, because his valet knows too much about him. I think I know my brother through and through, and I can say that the more I know him the more I love and esteem him for his loyalty to his Lord. I feel, in following him, that I am not following him only, but following the Master.

"Then I think I shall have to add that I do not know anybody who works harder than my brother. I saw in a window the other day this advertisement: 'All Mr. Spurgeon's works to be had within.' 'Ah!' I thought, 'they may get all my brother's printed works within, but his other works will be found everywhere else in earth and heaven;' for the results of his labor can be found in almost any part of the world, and this not by accident, but by the blessing of God upon what is downright grinding toil. Only those who stand by my brother's side know what an enormous amount of work he is obliged to get through in order to carry out the Master's service on earth.

"I must confess that a great deal of my brother's success is also due to his geniality. Is he not a man among men? I cannot remember all the genial jokes that he has made. The first joke I ever comprehended was made by my grandfather, who had been asked how much he weighed, and he replied that 'if he was weighed in the balance, he was afraid he

should be found wanting; but if he was weighed in the pulpit, he would be heavy enough.' That was our grandfather's joke; but I do not know how many I have heard from my brother, and there has been a shrewdness in connection with them that often reminds me of our old grandfather. It is just that genial spirit of my good brother that lightens his own and others' burdens; and many who have been in despair have been cheered and sent forward again by having the brighter side of the picture placed before them by him. How many of us, after having had an hour's talk with my brother, have gone away refreshed and radiant! In him you have the ingredients of a noble man, and God has helped him to consecrate them to His service. I do not know that it would be kind to wish him another fifty years of life; but as long as he lives may his life be crowned with as many blessings as have been vouchsafed him in the fifty years that have gone by!"

C. H. Spurgeon: "Dear friends, I am trying to consider that I am merely representing all of you who have done the work here. I could not have achieved what has been done had it not been for a willing, cheerful, constant, persevering, zealous people. If anybody who is very stiff and prim comes here for a time, it is only for a time. He generally says that he does not like *you*, and goes off; but the real reason is that there is nothing in him that is at all congruous with *me*, and away he goes. But here is

a people warm-hearted, loving, affectionate, tender — everything that is good. Of course we might all be a deal better, I hope we shall be ; but I do not know any people that can be better to a minister than you have been to me ; and I desire, while my brother is using this soap, which is manufactured on his own premises, and is perfectly genuine — he means every word he says — I desire to have you all put in the tub with me, and then I shall not object to any quantity of lather. I think it is a very blessed thing for us to have with us without a break three generations, — my father, my brother, and then my son."

Pastor Charles Spurgeon: "Dear friends, — I am here to-night to speak for two, for we are as one — Charlie and Tommy. I am here to say what no one else present can say, — this is my father, and a grand father too.

"I have gone into my father's study and sat at his feet to learn, many a time, but I never could open my mouth before him. When he said, 'Charlie, what are you going to preach from?' I wished I could get to the other side of the door as quickly as possible, for I was afraid, if I told him the text, he would want to know what the divisions were, and would probably say that the middle one was wrong. I have had a profound respect for him on these matters ; nevertheless I have always tried to get as much out of him as possible, because I knew that I could never empty his great pitcher. It may be true that I have been

some joy to him at some time, but it is with wonder that I now look upon him, and with profound astonishment shall I ever contemplate him, because he is a mighty man of God. I am devoutly thankful that I can glorify God with you to-night in celebrating my father's Jubilee."

C. H. Spurgeon: "Surely you have had enough of us all. I wish now to call upon some of our other children, namely, our students, to speak. There are many ministers here to-night whom I should have been very glad to ask to speak, but I cannot go beyond the programme. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than now to present Mr. Archibald Brown to you. God bless him for the sake of poor outcast London, and for all that tenderness of heart which he has! Though his sympathy with human misery sometimes brings him very low, it only qualifies him the more for the work to which God has called him."

Pastor Archibald G. Brown: "It has always been my joy and delight to remember that, by the providence of God, my life has been wonderfully interwoven with that of your pastor, and also with this church. It is now some seven-and-twenty years since, as a lad, I used to look forward to my holidays as an opportunity of running up to hear Mr. Spurgeon preach at the Surrey Music Hall. I remember, as if it were only yesterday, the sermon that first made me feel I was a sinner. The text was, 'Compel them to come in.' Twenty-three years ago

to-morrow, I was baptized by Mr. Spurgeon on this lower platform. I had often heard him preach at the Surrey Music Hall, and I remember that it was with awe and wonderment that I looked at him. Over and over again I felt that I would just give anything if he could only know me, and give me one shake of the hand, little dreaming that we should learn to know each other, or that I should ever be allowed to say a few words on behalf of the College at his Jubilee. But there is one failure about the College, — one thing that even our President has failed to do; he has never been able to put the stamp of his own genius on any of us: there is no need for me to argue that point, — you will believe that at once. Most of us have to say what the Indian did, who, when he was asked where he had been, said, 'Me preach.' 'What did they pay you?' was the next question, and he said, 'Sometimes one shilling, sometimes two shillings.' 'Well, that is mighty poor pay.' 'Yes,' said the Indian, 'but it is mighty poor preach.' Mr. Spurgeon has given all in the College a passion for souls, and has made it their ambition to speak as Paul and Barnabas did — 'They so spake that many people believed.' Above all things we desire that God will make us the means of winning many to the Saviour.

"Last week I was in the infirmary of the workhouse, sitting by the side of a poor dying woman, who had been brought to Christ through our mission

work. Death was written on her brow, and she said, 'I wish you would give us a look in on Sunday sometimes.' I said, 'Why?' She said, 'Because I should like you to give us a jolly good sermon.' I said, 'That is a queer expression; what do you mean by it?' She replied, 'A jolly good sermon is one that is all about Jesus Christ — one that is full of Him.' Sermons that have most of Jesus Christ in them are the best; and, under God, you, dear Mr. Spurgeon, have done more than any other man to make us come to that conclusion."

An address by the students of the College was then presented by Mr. H. H. Driver, their secretary; after which an address was presented by Mr. S. R. Pearce, on behalf of the teachers, parents, and scholars of the Tabernacle Sunday-school.

Mr. W. J. Orsman of the Golden Lane Mission, said: "When our good brother Moody spoke, I was reminded of what occurred years ago in Virginia. I had been preaching somewhat excitedly, perhaps a little in the style of the Salvation Army. I told an anecdote of yours, and mentioned your name. An old negress in the congregation became interested, and afterwards said to me, 'Do you know Massa Spurgeon?' 'Yes,' I said, 'he is my father;' at which she went down on her knees to me. I had to explain that I did not mean he was my father according to the flesh, but my spiritual father. Then the poor soul told me how she had read his sermons,

and how they had been blessed to her. I think it is twenty years since you, sir, came down to Golden Lane to open the old Tabernacle, and to preach your famous sermon to costermongers. The Earl of Shaftesbury visited us afterwards, and since then he has been more or less connected with our fraternity."

Mr. W. L. Lang, F. R. G. S., spoke on behalf of the Baptist Ministers of France; and after an address by Mr. William Olney, Jun., the meeting was closed with the following prayer by Mr. Spurgeon: —

"O God, Thou art infinitely good, a well that has overflowed forever. Blessed be Thy name! We have trusted in Thee, and we are not confounded. Thy servants remember dark days, and times of need, and hours of great difficulty, when we had nothing to stay ourselves upon except our God, and we never were better stayed. Never were we happier, never was there an intenser joy in our spirit than when we felt we were out of our depth, and yet could not drown, but could safely swim. Lord, we thank Thee for teaching us to trust Thee, for causing us to cast ourselves upon the invisible God, to rest in Him whose voice we cannot hear, whose person we cannot see, but who is nevertheless most certainly very near to His people. The Lord bless each speaker to-night! We would pray for each one individually; but Thou knowest each one. The Lord bless every member of this church, and bless every person who

has been here to-night! We would lift our hands to Thee, O Lord, to-night, and dedicate ourselves to Thee anew; for Thee to live, for Thee to die, if need be. Thine are we, thou Son of David, and oh, that we could follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest, and find this our joy, to live *in* Thee, to live *with* Thee, to live *for* Thee! Oh, send a blessing now upon every head! Reward these generous ones a thousand-fold, in their own persons, and in their children, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

On *Thursday evening*, *June* 19*th*, 1884, the second meeting of the Jubilee celebration was held in the Tabernacle. It was presided over by the Earl of Shaftesbury, K. G., and commenced with prayer by Mr. Spurgeon. After a list of the various societies represented at the celebration, and of congratulatory addresses, letters, and telegrams received, had been read by Mr. J. W. Harrald, Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary, the Earl of Shaftesbury said: —

"Many of you, perhaps all of you, will be surprised to see me here, but you will not be surprised when I explain the reason. This is the fiftieth birthday of our admirable, our invaluable friend, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. It is right, it is indispensable, it is necessary, that he should have the testimony of his congregation; and he has it. But it is also necessary, right, and equally indispensable that he should have the testimony of outsiders like myself, to show what

we think of the man, and what we think of his career as a devoted servant of our blessed Lord, and a conscientious and faithful laborer for the advancement of His kingdom.

"If I had not been told that I must be very brief, I could not have failed to enter into one or two topics relating to his character and conduct. I will not touch upon his literary career, but I will begin by showing that he stands as a marvel before you. This day he completes his fiftieth year, and thirty-one of those years he has been your minister. He began his ministry in New Park Street Chapel at nineteen years of age, and you see him now as he began, — the same true, simple man that he was, not puffed up by success, but rather humbled by it, and animated to go on still more in the noble career that God in His merciful providence marked out for him for the benefit of mankind. I cannot but call your attention to what we outsiders think, though your attention does not require to be so directed.

"What a powerful administrative mind our friend possesses is shown by that list which has been read of the various societies and associations constructed by his genius, and superintended by his care. These are more than enough to occupy the minds and hearts of some fifty ordinary men. Why, it seems to be the whole world in a nutshell! Mark what he has done by his missions, and his schools, and his various institutions. I will refer principally to that work in

which he shines the brightest, — the foundation and government of his College. My worthy friend has brought forward a large number of men to be useful in their generation by preaching the Word of God in all its simplicity and force, — men adapted to all classes, but more especially to that large mass who need instruction in the elementary principles of Christian truth. No man has produced a greater body of disciples capable and willing to carry on that noble work. I speak from some experience. I have heard his preachers at different times in our special services at theatres. To preach for that large class of people, untaught before in the truths of the gospel, strangers to the first principles of religious life, requires no ordinary adaptation. One had need understand the human heart, and the besetting temptations of an enormous aggregate of our fellow-creatures. Your evangelists have an easy, colloquial mode of addressing the people. They imitate the example of our Lord. They are picturesque in illustration and parable. That is the way to go to the hearts of the people. Stilted sentences, long periods, high-sounding words, and labored efforts of intellect are foreign to the taste of those whom we aim to teach. They like a religion that goes straight to the heart. A cosey religion and a cosey form of worship suit them. They like prayer that touches their present case, and tells their pressing need. When their instinct feels that you have gripped their weakness on earth, they

are ready to believe that you have linked them on to the Omnipotence in heaven.

"I remember when Mr. Spurgeon occupied Exeter Hall during the construction of this magnificent edifice. A nobler edifice I never saw. Filled as it is to-night, I confess that it completely overawes me. In his early days he adopted a mode of preaching which was, to my mind, most effective, most touching, and most instructive. It was that of taking a chapter of the Bible, and going through the paragraphs and verses in succession. When I heard him, I invariably said, 'This is a man after one's own heart; preach where he will, he cannot fail to touch the hearts, to arouse the intellects, and to stir to the depths the consciences of those that listen to his exhortations.'

"In this long course of success, of gratified ambition, and homage of praise, our friend remains as simple as ever. I doubt not that, if any one says to him, when he descends from this pulpit, that he has preached a noble discourse, he replies with his lips, or reflects in his heart, with old Baxter, 'The devil told me just as much.' There is the difference between a flash preacher and a true preacher; between those who tickle the ears, and those who contend for the faith; between those who keep together the congregations that come to be instructed and to be comforted with the words which the Holy Spirit dictates, and those who please the itching ears

of indiscriminate masses who come in succession, but having been once entertained, feel no further interest in the matter. The great force of our friend consists in the doctrine that he has invariably preached. He has ever preached 'Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,' as the mainstay of his ministrations, the solution of life's problem, the help of every one in this world, and the hope of every one for the life to come. This it is that has given him a deep, strong, and permanent power over his congregation. It holds together such mighty masses as I now see before me. This it is which brings them now, with heartfelt reverence and deep gratitude, to give thanks to Almighty God that this good man has been allowed to live to the present day, and which leads them to express to him the gratitude and reverence that they bear to him for his long and blessed services. I think that a great number of preachers in the present day, both in the Church of England and among the Nonconformist bodies, follow very much the habit of the chaplain mentioned by Pope. He said,

'He never mentions hell to ears polite.'

I would to God they would mention it a little more! They are very fond of talking of the love of our Lord, but they say very little of the issues that await the impenitent; and these are the persons to whom their efforts should be the most directed. When good Mr. Reeve, of Portman Chapel, was alive I always 'sat under his ministry,' as the phrase is.

One day, as I was coming across the Park, after church, I met a friend of mine, who said, 'Where have you been?' I said, 'As usual, to hear Mr. Reeve.' He said, 'Oh, I hate that kind of fellow! He is always telling you about your sins.'

"I heard a story, a year or two ago, about this very Tabernacle. The man who gave this history about himself said: 'I and my wife were the most godless, wicked, and wretched couple upon the face of the earth. We cared neither for God nor man. We never went to church or chapel. One evening we were passing by the Tabernacle, and my wife said to me, 'Let us go in.' I said, 'I have no objection to hear the nonsense talked.' They came in. Our friend was in his best vein, and you know what his best vein is. He touched upon the most solemn and serious things. When the man and his wife went home, the man said, 'Sukey, did you hear what the preacher said?' She said, 'I did. He told us that we should go to hell if we did not pray.' 'Do you ever pray?' 'No,' said his wife. 'Nor I,' said the man; 'and I do not know how to do it.' 'Oh,' said the wife, 'by the bye, there is our little Mary upstairs; she goes to Sunday-school, she will know how to pray.' Up they went. They woke the little child, and they said to her, 'Mary, you must pray for father and mother.' And the little girl did pray for them; and what do you think was the declaration of the man? 'Why, sir,' said he, 'from that

hour I was a changed man, and I now go to places of worship with all my heart and soul.'

"Talking of the men that have been raised up by our friend Spurgeon, I should be sorry to omit the founder of the Golden Lane Costermongers' Mission, my friend, Mr. Orsman. The institution among the costermongers has civilized, and in some instances, I hope, Christianized the costermongers. I derive benefit from it, for I am a costermonger. People sometimes write to me, 'The Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G.' K.G. means 'Knight of the Garter,' and I always, when I write my name in full, add 'and C.' That means 'and costermonger.' I am proud to add that to my address. The effect of the work among the costermongers has been to diffuse feelings of humanity towards the brute creation. The constant observation now is that the improvement in the condition of the donkeys is entirely due to my friend, Mr. Spurgeon, through Mr. Orsman.

"Well, now, I think that I have talked nearly enough. I think of Mr. Spurgeon as a man. He is one of the most admirable, affable, amiable fellows I ever knew in the whole course of my life. I do not enlarge upon his merits as a pastor. You all know the love he exhibits to you, and you all know the affection that you bear for him in return. You love him, not only for his private character, and his public achievements, but you love him personally for his good nature, for his genial humor, for his

generous kindness, and for the free and easy manner in which he associates and identifies himself with you all. Whatever Mr. Spurgeon is in private he is in the pulpit, and what he is in the pulpit he is in private. He is one and the same man in every aspect, and a kinder, better, honester, nobler man never existed on the face of the earth. This is his Jubilee. We cannot wish that he should live to see another Jubilee, but this we may wish and pray for, — that the rest of his life may be according to its beginning; that he may go on increasing in service, in depth of feeling, and in power of exhibiting it, in winning souls to the Lord, and in advancing the heavenly kingdom; and may the whole course of his life on earth illustrate those blessed words in the written Word of God, 'The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'"

Canon Basil Wilberforce (son of the late Bishop Wilberforce, and grandson of the great anti-slavery champion), then gave an earnest, stirring address. Rev. J. W. Todd, D.D., who came with a deputation from the London Baptist Association, as the bearer of a congratulatory address from that body, was then introduced to the meeting by the Rev. J. P. Chown, and presented the address.

Rev. O. P. Gifford, of Warren Avenue Baptist Church, Boston, U. S., presented an address from the Baptist Ministers of Boston and its vicinity.

C. H. Spurgeon: "Anything which binds our two countries into a yet closer union must be a blessing. We are truly one. I believe that we are one in the excellences of the race, and also one in its faults. I have two sham books in my library, which I sometimes show to friends. One is 'Jonathan on Exaggeration,' and the volume that stands side by side with it is 'John Bull on Bragging.' Both of us do a little of that. I have no doubt that New England learned it from Old England. I do thank a great number of American friends who have kindly written to me at this time, and a great many more who are always writing to me, telling me of their troubles and asking me for sympathy, telling me of their joys whenever they get any good from the sermons, and blessing God for it. I count myself right happy to-day to have so many letters from every part of the world, of some of which I confess I cannot read a word, but I know what they mean. As the Quakers sometimes 'take the sense of the meeting' without formally putting the resolution, so have I taken the sense of Bohemian, Swedish, Dutch, and other letters which I have had to-day, which I am unable to read."

Sir William McArthur, M. P., then gave an animated address; and he was followed by the Rev. Newman Hall, LL.B., Rev. W. Williams, of Upton Chapel, and other speakers.

Mr. T. H. Olney then presented the amount of the

Spurgeon Jubilee Fund, exceeding £4,500, gathered from a large variety of persons, old and young, in sums from a penny to a hundred pounds.

Mr. Spurgeon: "Now I thank everybody who has given a hundred pounds, and everybody who has given a penny. God bless you, and return it to you in every way! One of our brethren told you the other night what once happened to me. I had been preaching in a country place, and a good woman gave me five shillings. I said to her, 'Well, my dear friend, I do not want your money.' She said, 'But you must take it: I give it to you because I got good from you.' I said, 'Shall I give it to the College?' She answered, 'I don't care about the College. I care about you.' 'Then I will give it to the Orphanage.' 'No,' she said, 'you take it yourself.' I said, 'You want it more than I do.' She replied, 'Now, do you think that your Lord and Master would have talked like that to the woman who came and broke the alabaster box over Him? I do not think He would.' She added, 'I know you do not mean to be unkind. I worked extra to earn it, and give it to you.' I told her that she owed me nothing, and that woman owed the Lord everything, and asked again, 'What am I to do with it?' She said, 'Buy anything you like with it. Only, mind, you must have it for yourself.' I mention the incident because it is much in that spirit that the friends have given now. The Lord bless you yet more and more, you and your children!"

Rev. J. P. Chown offered prayer, and the meeting was closed with the Doxology.

This was not the first great testimonial presented to Mr. Spurgeon. Five years before, namely, on the 20th May, 1879, the noble sum of £6,248 18s. 5d. was handed to him as a gift from his loving people and many friends. Nearly half of this sum — £3,000 — were the net proceeds of a monster bazaar. Such a result was the more remarkable, because the pastor had no hand in the multiplied operations. The bazaar was adopted as likely to give an opportunity to the very poorest to contribute something; and the result exceeded all expectations. A note in "The Sword and the Trowel" for February, 1879, states:

"The pastor was unable to be present, or even to leave his bed, but night by night amazing news of success comforted him, till the friends were able to send him word that the gross takings were £3,400. This is very wonderful, and shows what a willing people can and will accomplish."

The larger half of the gross sum was contributed in money. In looking over the list of contributors, we notice only a few names connected with gifts which required three figures in the pounds' column; a larger number required two figures; but the bulk was made up of a very large number of smaller, and some — estimated at their money value — very small contributions. Manifestly, *the people* — we mean the great crowd of loving givers — gave willingly.

It was a kind of open secret that Mr. Spurgeon

did not intend to appropriate any part of the noble gift to himself or his personal uses.

With his usual, and often princely, generosity, he gave £5,000 to further endow the Tabernacle Almshouses, and the remainder he apportioned to other benevolent enterprises. He would have been perfectly justified in retaining any part or the whole, as most men would have done; but in this case he felt, as his whole life has shown, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." He is not rich, and never will be, except in good works, and in the love of his people and many friends, in the deep affection of thousands of poor and needy recipients of his bounty, and in the growing esteem of the whole of Christendom. Like his divine Master, "He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor." But he gives wisely, and in business matters few men are more acute. May his righteousness endure forever!

In a brief notice of the presentation of the testimonial, in "The Sword and the Trowel" for July, 1879, Mr. Spurgeon remarks on "the singularly pleasing coincidence that at the church-meeting held" two days later than the presentation "no less than thirty-seven candidates came before the church, and confessed their faith in Christ, — the largest number that we have ever received at one church-meeting. This was the more remarkable as it happened entirely without arrangement on the part of the pastor or any one else."

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. SPURGEON AS A PREACHER AND AUTHOR.

AS a preacher, Mr. Spurgeon is unique. No man ever wielded so wide and so mighty an influence in his own day, by means of the pulpit and the press, as the pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle has done for more than a third of a century.

The weekly issue of his sermons has gone on without a break from January, 1855; and the close of the year 1891 witnessed the completion of the thirty-seventh volume. The regular sale of the weekly numbers, monthly parts, and yearly volumes has been well maintained, from year to year, throughout the United Kingdom. Outside the British Isles the circulation is even larger. In the United States, for instance, where his name is almost as well known, and certainly as much honored, as in his native land, the sermons are regularly published in many newspapers, while volumes are issued by various publishers. The sermons are frequently printed in full in "The Australasian" newspaper, and paid for as advertisements. Besides this, trans-

lations have been made from time to time into different European, Asiatic, and other languages; so that they are known and read everywhere.

Up to the close of 1891 the number of separate discourses issued in the regular weekly series was two thousand two hundred and thirty-six. In addition to this number, some hundreds have been published in various magazines and papers. Mr. Spurgeon's writings are almost sufficient to form a library, and already amount to nearly a hundred volumes. They have been classified as "Expository," "Homiletical," "Illustrative," "Devotional," "For Students," "Historical," "Popular," and "Extracts." Mr. Spurgeon's magazine, "The Sword and the Trowel," has now completed the twenty-seventh year of its publication.

Of all these works "The Treasury of David" is the most gigantic. It occupied considerable portions of Mr. Spurgeon's time during twenty years; and during the whole of that period Mr. J. L. Keys, one of Mr. Spurgeon's secretaries, continued to search the library of the British Museum, and other libraries, and to cull from every available source everything worthy of quotation upon the Book of Psalms. The value of this work to ministers is attested by the increasing number of applications made to Mrs. Spurgeon for grants from her Book Fund of these highly prized volumes; while its acceptability with the general religious public is proved by the fact that, although

the volumes are published at eight shillings each, more than 120,000 have been sold.

No commentary on a single book of the Bible has in any age enjoyed such a circulation.

"Among all orders of Christians," says Mr. Spurgeon, "the 'Treasury' has found its way, unrestrained by sectarian prejudice, — another proof of the unity of the spiritual life, and the oneness of the food upon which it delights to feed."

What the preparation of his *magnum opus* was to Mr. Spurgeon, he tells us in his preface to the seventh and last volume: —

"A tinge of sadness is in my spirit as I quit 'The Treasury of David' never to find on earth a richer storehouse, though the whole palace of Revelation is open to me. Blessed have been the days spent in meditation, mourning, hoping, believing, and exulting with David! Can I hope to spend hours more joyous on this side the golden gate? Perhaps not; for the seasons have been very choice in which the harp of the great poet of the sanctuary has charmed my ears. Yet the training which has come of the heavenly contemplations may haply go far to create and sustain a peaceful spirit which will never be without its own happy psalmody, and never without aspirations after something higher than it yet has known. The Book of Psalms instructs in the use of wings as well as words; it sets us both mounting and singing. Often have I ceased my commenting on the

text, that I might rise with the psalm, and gaze on the visions of God. If I might only hope that these volumes will be as useful to other hearts in the reading as to mine in the writing, I shall be well rewarded by the prospect. . . . And now the colossal work is done! To God be all glory! More than twenty years have glided away while this pleasant labor has been in the doing; but the wealth of mercy that has been lavished on me during that time, my grateful heart is unable to measure. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all these years, and made my heart sing new psalms for new mercies. There is none like the God of Jeshurun. To Him be all glory for ever and ever!"

The full amount of good accomplished by Mr. Spurgeon's sermons will never be known on earth. We have the record of a very large number of conversions through the reading of them, and the testimony of many who, through illness or distance from a place of worship, can seldom, if ever, go to the house of God, to whom Mr. Spurgeon's weekly sermon is a Sabbath feast, in the strength of which they go through the week.

Mr. Thomas Spurgeon wrote home from Australia to his father, on one occasion, saying: —

"I received a visit, in Geelong, from a man who produced from his pocket a torn and discolored copy of 'The Australasian,' dated June, 1868, which contained a sermon by C. H. Spurgeon, entitled 'The

Approachableness of Jesus' (No. 809). To this sermon my visitor attributed his conversion. He lived alone, about twenty miles from Geelong, and had not entered a place of worship more than four or five times in twenty years, and had taken to drink until *delirium tremens* seized upon him. When partially recovered, with not a human being near, his eye lighted on the sermon in the newspaper, which brought him to Jesus."

We remember Pastor J. A. Spurgeon relating to us, some years ago, the fact of a once dissipated character having been converted by the reading of one of his brother's sermons. If memory serves us well, it was one of the sermons on "The Brazen Serpent." Having means at command, and wishing to show his gratitude to God in some practical form, he resolved to publish, in a newspaper circulating in drink-shops and similar places, week by week, a sermon by the man God had used for his conversion. As it was published as an advertisement, it must have been a costly testimony for God; but it was, in a sense, his answer to the question, "How much owest thou unto the Lord?" Probably it was a sermon so published which the poor crushed and trembling drunkard read. It was a sermon which went to his heart. "And, sir," said he to Mr. T. Spurgeon, "I've never touched the liquor since. I can't tell you how grateful I am to your father; but I thought the best way for me to do honor to the father was to tell his son of the bless-

ing the printed word has been to me." The paper had been lent about until it was yellow and soiled, and so worn that it would hardly hold together.

Concerning these sermons in newspapers, Mr. Spurgeon wrote, sixteen years ago: —

"By my permission, the sermons were printed as advertisements in several of the Australian papers; one gentleman spending, week by week, a sum which we scarcely dare to mention, lest it should not be believed. By this means they were read far away in the bush, and never were results more manifest; for numbers of letters were received in answer to the inquiry as to whether the advertisements should be continued, all bearing testimony to the good accomplished by their being inserted in the newspapers. A selection of these letters was sent to me, and made my heart leap for joy, for they detailed conversions marvellous indeed. Besides these, many epistles of like character came to me, showing that the rough dwellers in the wilds were glad to find in their secular papers the best of all news, the story of pardon bought with blood."

From Massachusetts, U. S. A., a friend writes to Mr. Spurgeon: "A gentleman gave three volumes of your sermons to an Irish boy; he gave them to a friend of mine, and this friend was anxious that I should read them. I did not want to read the *dry stuff*, but she pleaded so hard that I took one to please her. I had read only a few lines when I was

convicted of sin; but I was about two years before I received the assurance of forgiveness. One day, as I was reading your sermon on 'The Blood' (No. 228), light came; I understood what faith was, and I believed. I do all the good I can with your sermons by lending them to others, and praying the Lord to bless them."

An interesting reference is made in "The Sword and the Trowel" for January, 1880, to Dr. Alexander Keith, author of "The Evidence of Prophecy," and other valuable works: "He is now confined to his bed, from which he knows he will never be lifted until he is carried to the place of sepulture. Not a murmur, however, escapes his lips. He has the piety of a saint, and the simplicity of a child; but you can see the old fire burn when the foundation truths are assailed by men of modern thought. His chief joy on the Sabbath, dear Mr. Editor, is to hear one of your sermons. The reader is a little maid; and he avows that he has *the best preacher* and hears *the best sermon* in the town. . . . I am commissioned to give you his grateful thanks for the rich feast you give him. He, moreover, wished me to say that, while spending the winter at the Bridge of Allan, two or three years ago, your sermons were read by invalids in five separate rooms of the same establishment every Sunday."

Some eleven years or more since, "The Freeman," Baptist newspaper, said in one of its issues: —

"The New Year's gift of the proprietors of the little French monthly, 'L'Echo de la Vérité,' to their subscribers, is a translation of Mr. Spurgeon's fifteen hundredth sermon, 'The Lifting Up of the Brazen Serpent' (Num. xxi. 9). . . . It may well cheer the heart of our dear brother during his forced retreat [he was then staying at Mentone], to know that the gospel, through the instrumentality of these sermons, is ever active, and that he is truly transmitting the divine influence and light while in his darkened chamber, as much as if he were in the face of day. The vitality of the truth concerning the work of Christ is equalled only by its continual novelty."

A Methodist minister in Ireland writes thus to Mr. Spurgeon: —

"Many a time these few years I have considered whether you know that you are preaching in unnumbered pulpits every Lord's-day, in many cases word for word as reported in your volumes. You are aware, I suppose, that the weekly sermon is read by two thirds of the Protestants in Ulster."

The deacons of a church in South Australia, in sending a donation for the Girls' Orphanage some years ago, wrote: —

"We have for years past received substantial help from your written sermons. Christians have been helped on their way, and others have, through their instrumentality, been introduced into the light and liberty of the gospel."

A sailor friend of Mr. Spurgeon writes him thus from Jamaica: —

"We have given away nearly all the books and sermons that we had. We are saving a few for the poor negroes at the other ports to which we are going. They were so thankful for them at the Falkland Islands, and enjoyed reading them so much. In one house I went in, I saw 'Morning by Morning' and 'Evening by Evening;' they looked quite homely to me, as we use them every morning and evening on board ship."

The little island of Bryher, one of the Scilly Isles, has a church and a chapel for its one hundred and twenty inhabitants. Service is held in the church only occasionally, when the chapel is closed. On other Sundays the service is held in the chapel, and the sexton, who is also parish clerk, reads one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, and they sing Wesley's hymns.

A Christian worker in Florida, U. S. A., writes:

"Several weeks ago, I lay ill in the wilds of Florida. Weak and faint-hearted, I lay pondering on the strange providence of the Master, when one of your sermons was placed in my hands. The refreshing shower revived me, and gave me fresh hope and courage; and I rose from my sick couch to strive still more earnestly to gain access to the hearts of those by whom I am surrounded; and to-day, in a small class that I have formed out here in the wilderness, the Lord made His presence felt, and blessed us with

an awakening that I have never seen here before, and tears of repentance were shed by many."

There is a quaint letter from Michigan; a cheering testimony from Quebec; a letter from a Christian woman in Victoria, who tells of a blessing received many years ago: "At that time I lost a darling boy; everything seemed dark, and nothing brought me any comfort. The Word of God, that had been my stay through many similar trials, was all darkness to me. A friend brought me one of your sermons, and asked me to allow her to read it. At first I refused, but at last consented. I forget the title, but it was that everything is ordered by God — no chance. I felt all the time my friend was reading afraid to breathe. I could only say, 'Go on, go on.' When she had finished it, I leaped from my couch, and said, 'All is right; thank God my dark mind is all light again.' I have had similar trials since, and many other trials, but I could say from my heart, 'Thy will be done; it is all right.' At this time my husband ordered your sermons monthly, and we continue to do so. Every Sunday evening we read one of them aloud for all to hear, and afterwards I send them into the bush."

The son of Kaffir parents writes Mr. Spurgeon as follows: —

"PORT ELIZABETH, SOUTH AFRICA.

"DEAR SIR, — I don't know how to describe my joy and my feelings in this present moment. We never did see each other face to face, but still there is something between you and me which guided me to make these few lines for you. One day, as I was

going to my daily work, I met a friend of mine in the street. We spoke about the Word of God, and he asked me whether I had ever seen one of Mr. Spurgeon's books. I said, 'What Mr. Spurgeon is that? One of the Independent ministers in London?' And I said, 'No, I never saw such a book in my life.' He said he bought it from the bookseller. I asked the name of the book, and he said it was 'The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,' and I went straight to the shop, and bought one. I have read a good bit of it. On my reading it I arrived on a place where Job said, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' I am sure I can't tell how to describe the goodness you have done to us, we black people of South Africa. We are black not only outside, even inside; I would n't mind to be a black man only in color. It is a terrible thing to be a black man from the soul to the skin; but still I am very glad to say your sermons have done something good to me. May the Lord bless your efforts and prosper your work? May it please Him to gain many sons into His glory through you as His instrument, not only in London, but also in Africa!"

From Denmark, where twelve of the sermons had been translated into Danish, Mr. Spurgeon received an encouraging testimony of the good that had been accomplished.

Two missionaries, in one of the Grecian Isles, write: "Your sermons are to us like rain upon a dry land. We have no church to attend, and no friends to associate with."

One of Mr. Spurgeon's elders communicates to him the following interesting incident: —

"An Englishman was engaged as an engineer in a South American city. He was surrounded with Portuguese, and seldom saw the face of one of his own countrymen. Somehow he heard that there

was an Englishman confined for life in the prison. Being a Christian man he determined to call on him, and speak to him concerning the love of God to sinners. Having obtained permission he entered the prison, and commenced at once to speak through the iron grating to the convict. The latter told him that, a few years before, a young Englishman had called upon him in a similar manner, and left behind some English novels, *but between the leaves of one of the novels* there was a sermon which had been preached in Exeter Hall by C. H. Spurgeon in 1856. The convict read the sermon. It was upon 'Salvation to the Uttermost' (No. 84), and it referred to the murderer, William Palmer, then under sentence of death. The words entered his heart, and he immediately knelt down in his cell, and cried for pardon, and he received a sense of forgiveness on the spot, and he was still rejoicing in the assurance that God for Christ's sake had forgiven him. He said he had no hope of liberty in this life, but he rejoiced in the glorious hope set before him in the gospel."

Mr. Spurgeon possesses one of his own sermons around which gathers a peculiar interest. It is yellow, travel-worn, and discolored by exposure to the sun. It is No. 408, vol. vii., entitled, "Accidents, not Punishments." It was carried by Dr. Livingstone in his last journey to Africa. Across the top is written —

"*Very good.* — D. L."

It was found in one of his boxes after his death, and was sent by his daughter, Mrs. Bruce, to Mr. Spurgeon.

Sermon No. 1,500, on "Instant Salvation; or, Lifting up the Brazen Serpent," has been made a great blessing to many. One given to a gentleman on the Parade at St. Leonards was the means of his salvation.

A minister relates that, when in Scotland, he got lost in a certain glen. The people there knew nothing about Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone, but at the name of Spurgeon they woke up. They read his sermons, as those shown to the minister plainly proved. There being no kirk in the glen, they met together, and read one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons. One old man said he "wad shoost gang on his twa honds and knees a' the way tae Glesca, tae get a sicht o' him."

The following cheering letter, addressed to Mr. Spurgeon, appeared in "The Sword and the Trowel" for October, 1891: "I want to express my thanks for the good I have received from your 'Morning by Morning,' and also your sermons. A few days back I went to see a poor man, who has been laid by for eleven weeks. I found him much depressed, as he has a family dependent upon him. I read him your sermon, 'My Times are in Thy Hands' (No. 2,205), and you would have been glad to see how much it comforted him, and seemed to help him."

The same magazine contains the following "Note:"

"A Scotch friend writes to tell us that, when he was sending some flowers to an invalid, he put in a note, and enclosed an illustrated leaflet, 'He Healeth all our Diseases,' extracted from Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, and published by the Drummond Tract Society. The writer then goes on to say: 'The lady said to the boy who carried the flowers, "Tell Mr. —— that this was just what I was wanting." As soon as I heard this, I sent another leaflet (the last I had), "God is our Refuge," and wrote another letter, saying that it was never too soon, and, thank God, never too late, for the soul to think upon eternal things; and drew her attention to the fact that the leaflets contained the words of one who had been on the border-land of eternity, ay, at the very gate of heaven. . . . Dear Spurgeon, your leaflet resulted in her entrance into the kingdom, and she had a happy death. Just about a quarter of an hour before she died she called her son and daughter to her bedside, and bade them give their hearts to the Saviour, and asked them to meet her in heaven.'"

Of translations, the Dutch have exceeded all besides, but many volumes have been published in German. Volumes have appeared in Welsh, Italian, French, and Swedish. A handsome edition of four volumes has been largely circulated in Sweden, and the translator has informed Mr. Spurgeon of the conversion of some of noble and even of royal birth through their perusal. Sermons have also been

published in Spanish, Gaelic, Russ, Lettish, Servian, Hungarian, Maori, Arabic, Telugu, Urdu, and many other tongues. An edition has also been published in Karen, for the many thousands of Karen converts.

In "The Sword and the Trowel" for October, 1891, are the following "Notes" concerning translations of Mr. Spurgeon's works: —

"Permission has been recently given for the translation of 'All of Grace' into the Urdu or Hindustani language, for the benefit of the native church in the Punjab, India; while a Presbyterian missionary in Allahabad writes: 'I have four volumes of your sermons, which I have let Hindus and Christians read. I have had some of them translated into Hindustani, and published in a vernacular paper of which I am editor. That which I delight in, in all your sermons, is the holding up of the Lord Jesus Christ, especially in holding Him up as the Lamb of God.'

"We are also informed by 'The Baptist' that 'Some fifty or sixty of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are in course of being translated into Urdu, by a native Christian catechist of the Punjab, with a view to publication in that quasi-universal language of India.'

"A friend writes to Mrs. Spurgeon: 'A Nestorian pastor, from Ooroomiah, showed me a paper published once a month by the American Presbyterians in Ooroomiah, in modern Syriac. Among other articles are sermons of Mr. Spurgeon's translated

into Syriac. Pastor H. read part of one to me, from Isaiah xli. 1 ("Solemn Pleadings for Revival," No. 1,215), and interpreted it into English. I got blessing and refreshment to my own soul as he did so. He had another paper with a sermon in it, from Prov. xxiii. 17, 18 ("All the Day Long," No. 2,150). This, he said, he read over and over again, and got much blessing to his soul from it. So, praise God, while Mr. Spurgeon is lying sick at Norwood, the Lord Jesus is using his words to strengthen and bless the hearts of the Nestorians far away among the mountains of Persia!'"

The sermons have been like a river, small in their beginning, but widening and deepening in their onward flow, till their waters have made glad multitudes in the cities, towns, villages, and hamlets in our own and other lands.

During the Conference of the Pastors' College Evangelical Association, in 1889, one of the brethren (Dr. Usher, of Belfast) prayed very earnestly for the conversion of the children of the ministers who were present. Mr. Spurgeon was greatly moved by the prayer, and offered to write a letter to the children of any minister who would forward the names and addresses of his children. Two letters were prepared, one for the younger children, and the other for the older sons and daughters of ministers. A copy of the latter is given on the next page: —

WESTWOOD, NORWOOD.

O Lord, bless this letter!

MY DEAR ——, — I was, a little while ago, at a meeting for prayer, where a large number of ministers were gathered together. The subject of prayer was "Our Children." It soon brought tears to my eyes to hear those good fathers pleading with God for their sons and daughters. As they went on entreating the Lord to save their families, my heart seemed ready to burst with strong desire that it might be even so. Then I thought, I will write to those sons and daughters, and remind them of their parents' prayers.

Dear ——, you are highly privileged in having parents who pray for you. Your name is known in the courts of heaven. Your case has been laid before the throne of God. *Do you pray for yourself?* If you do not do so, why not? If other people value your soul, can it be right for you to neglect it? All the entreaties and wrestlings of your father will avail you nothing if you never seek the Lord yourself. You know this.

You do not intend to cause grief to dear mother and father; but you do. So long as you are not saved, they can never rest. However obedient and sweet and kind you may be, they will never feel happy about you until you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so find everlasting salvation.

Think of this. Remember how much you have already sinned, and none can wash you but Jesus.

When you grow up you may become very sinful, and none can change your nature and make you holy but the Lord Jesus, through His Spirit.

You need what father and mother seek for you, and you need it *now*. Why not seek it at once? I heard a father pray, "Lord, save our children, *and save them young*." It is never too soon to be safe; never too soon to be happy; never too soon to be holy; Jesus loves to receive the very young ones.

You cannot save yourself, but the great Lord Jesus can save you. Ask Him to do it. "He that asketh, receiveth." Then trust in Jesus to save you. He can do it, for He died and rose again, that "whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Come and tell Jesus you have sinned; seek forgiveness; trust in Him for it, and be sure that you are saved.

Then imitate our Lord. Be at home what Jesus was at Nazareth; yours will be a happy home, and your dear father and mother will feel that the dearest wish of their hearts has been granted them.

I pray you to think of heaven and hell; for in one of those places you will live forever. *Meet me in heaven!* Meet me at once at the mercy-seat. Run upstairs, and pray to the great Father, through Jesus Christ.

Yours very lovingly,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Mr. Spurgeon has heard of many boys and girls led to the Saviour by these letters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. SPURGEON AS A HYMN-WRITER.

IN the early years of his ministry Mr. Spurgeon sometimes indulged in the making of verses; and even before this he gave proof of ability, if not of genius, in this field. Space will not allow us to be very copious in our quotations; but a few specimens may be given. We give first a copy of verses, written at the age of eighteen, on the Redeemer's name: —

"IMMANUEL."

When once I mourned a load of sin;
When conscience felt a wound within;
When all my works were thrown away;
When on my knees I knelt to pray —
Then, blissful hour! — remembered well —
I learned Thy love, Immanuel.

When storms of sorrow toss my soul
When waves of care around me roll;
When comforts sink, when joys shall flee;
When hopeless griefs shall gape for me, —
One word the tempest's rage shall quell;
That word, Thy name — Immanuel.

When for the truth I suffer shame;
When foes pour scandal on my name;
When cruel taunts and jeers abound;
When "Bulls of Bashan" gird me round, —
Secure within Thy power I 'll dwell;
That tower, Thy grace — Immanuel.

When hell, enraged, lifts up her roar;
When Satan stops my path before;
When fiends rejoice, and wait my end;
When legioned hosts their arrows send, —
Fear not, my soul, but hurl at hell
Thy battle-cry — Immanuel.

When down the hill of life I go;
When o'er my feet death's waters flow;
When in the deepening flood I sink;
When friends stand weeping on the brink, —
I 'll mingle with my last farewell
Thy lovely name — Immanuel.

When tears are banished from mine eye;
When fairer worlds than these are nigh;
When heaven shall fill my ravished sight;
When I shall bathe in sweet delight;
One joy all joys shall far excel, —
To see Thy face, Immanuel.

In 1866 Mr. Spurgeon published "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns, for Public, Social, and Private Worship," to which he gave the title of "Our Own Hymn-book." In this collection there are about a dozen psalms, and as many hymns, from the compiler's own pen. In the preface he makes the following all too modest reference to his own compositions: —

"The editor has inserted, with great diffidence, a very few of his own composition, chiefly among the Psalms; and his only

apology for so doing is the fact that of certain difficult Psalms he could find no version at all fitted for singing, and was therefore driven to turn them into verse himself. As these original compositions are but few, it is hoped that they will not prejudice the ordinary reader against the rest of the collection; and possibly one or two of them may gratify the generous judgment of our friends."

We give two of his paraphrases of the Psalms and two of his hymns: —

PSALM XV.

Lord, I would dwell with Thee,
On Thy most holy hill:
Oh, shed Thy grace abroad in me,
To mould me to thy will!

Thy gate of pearl stands wide
For those who walk upright;
But those who basely turn aside
Thou chasest from Thy sight.

Oh, tame my tongue to peace,
And tune my heart to love;
From all reproaches may I cease,
Made harmless as a dove!

The vile, though proudly great,
No flatterer find in me;
I count Thy saints of poor estate
Far nobler company.

Faithful, but meekly kind;
Gentle, yet boldly true;
I would possess the perfect mind
Which in my Lord I view.

But, Lord, these graces all
Thy Spirit's work must be:
To Thee, through Jesu's blood I call,
Create them all in me.

PSALM LXXXIII.

O God, be Thou no longer still,
  Thy foes are leagued against Thy law,
Make bare Thine arm on Zion's hill,
  Great Captain of our Holy War!

As Amalek and Ishmael
  Had war forever with Thy seed,
So all the Hosts of Rome and hell
  Against Thy Son their armies lead.

Though they 're agreed in nought beside,
  Against Thy truth they all unite;
They rave against the Crucified,
  And hate the gospel's growing might.

By Kishon's brook all Jabin's band,
  At Thy rebuke were swept away;
O Lord, display Thy mighty hand,
  A single stroke shall win the day.

Come, rushing wind, the stubble chase!
  Come, sacred fire, the forest burn!
Come, Lord, with all Thy conquering grace,
  Rebellious hearts to Jesus turn!

That men may know at once that Thou,
  Jehovah, lovest truth right well;
And that Thy church shall never bow
  Before the boastful gates of hell.

EARLY MORNING PRAYER-MEETING.

Sweetly the holy hymn
  Breaks on the morning air;
Before the world with smoke is dim,
  We meet to offer prayer.

While flowers are wet with dews,
  Dew of our souls descend;
Ere yet the sun the day renews,
  O Lord, Thy Spirit send!

Upon the battle-field,
Before the fight begins,
We seek, O Lord, Thy sheltering shield,
To guard us from our sins!

Ere yet our vessel sails
Upon the stream of day,
We plead, O Lord, for heavenly gales
To speed us on our way!

On the lone mountain side,
Before the morning's light,
The Man of Sorrows wept and cried,
And rose refresh'd with might.

Oh, hear *us* then, for we
Are very weak and frail,
We make the Saviour's name our plea,
And surely must prevail!

JESU'S PRESENCE DELIGHTFUL

Amidst us our Belovèd stands,
And bids us view His piercèd hands;
Points to His wounded feet and side,
Blest emblems of the Crucified.

What food luxurious loads the board,
When at His table sits the Lord!
The wine how rich, the bread how sweet,
When Jesus deigns the guests to meet!

If now with eyes defiled and dim,
We see the signs but see not Him,
Oh, may His love the scales displace,
And bid us see Him face to face!

Our former transports we recount,
When with Him in the Holy mount,
These cause our souls to thirst anew,
His marr'd but lovely face to view.

Thou glorious Bridegroom of our hearts,
Thy present smile a heaven imparts:
Oh, lift the veil, if veil there be,
Let every saint Thy beauties see!

FLY TO JESUS

is the title of another good hymn of Mr. Spurgeon's, which is not in "Our Own Hymn Book."

Guilty sinner, fly to Jesus;
He alone can purge our guilt;
From each deadly sin He frees us,
'T was for this His blood was spilt.
Come, and welcome;
Come this moment, if thou wilt.

Empty sinner, haste to Jesus,
For in Him all fulness dwells,
And His inmost soul it pleases
When a longing soul He fills.
Be not backward;
He invites whoever wills.

Hopeless sinner, look to Jesus,
In His death thy ransom see;
From despair His word releases,
Trust in Him, and fear shall flee.
High as heaven
Are his thoughts of love to thee.

Worst of sinners, come to Jesus,
He has said He 'll cast out none;
Come with all thy foul diseases,
He can cure them every one;
And, with wonder,
Thou shalt sing what grace has done.

At various times Mr. Spurgeon has written hymns that have been published in "The Sword and the

Trowel." We give two of them as specimens of the variety of styles in which he writes.

A BATTLE HYMN.

Forth to the battle rides our King,
He climbs His conquering car;
He fits His arrows to the string,
And hurls His bolts afar.

Convictions pierce the stoutest hearts,
They smart, they bleed, they die;
Slain by Immanuel's well-aimed darts,
In helpless heaps they lie.

Behold, He bares His two-edged sword,
And deals almighty blows;
His all-revealing, killing Word
'Twixt joints and marrow goes.

Who can resist Him in the fight?
He cuts through coats of mail.
Before the terror of His might
The hearts of rebels fail.

Anon, arrayed in robes of grace,
He rides the trampled plain,
With pity beaming in His face,
And mercy in His train.

Mighty to save He now appears,
Mighty to raise the dead,
Mighty to stanch the bleeding wound,
And lift the fallen head.

Victor alike in love and arms,
Myriads around Him bend;
Each captive owns His matchless charms,
Each foe becomes His friend.

They crown Him on the battle-field,
  They press to kiss His feet;
Their hands, their hearts, their all they yield
  His conquest is complete.

None love Him more than those He slew;
  His love their hate has slain;
Henceforth their souls are all on fire
  To spread His gentle reign.

THE FOUNTAIN OF PRAISE.

All my soul was dry and dead
Till I learned that Jesus bled;
Bled and suffer'd in my place,
Bearing sin in matchless grace.

Then a drop of heavenly love
Fell upon me from above,
And by secret, mystic art
Reached the centre of my heart.

Glad the story I recount,
How that drop became a fount,
Bubbled up a living well,
Made my heart begin to swell.

All within my soul was praise,
Praise increasing all my days;
Praise which could not silent be
Floods were struggling to be free.

More and more the waters grew,
Open wide the flood-gates flew,
Leaping forth in streams of song
Flowed my happy life along.

Lo, a river clear and sweet
Laved my glad, obedient feet!
Soon it rose up to my knees,
And I praised and prayed with ease.

Now my soul in praises swims,
Bathes in songs, and psalms, and hymns;
Plunges down into the deeps,
All her powers in worship steeps.

Hallelujah! O my Lord,
Torrents from my soul are poured!
I am carried clean away,
Praising, praising all the day.

In an ocean of delight,
Praising God with all my might,
Self is drowned. So let it be:
Only Christ remains to me.

This hymn was written only a year or two ago. Those who read it will note that the same love to Christ which was the burden of the hymn of the youth of eighteen is the theme of the matured Christian pastor, who has meanwhile become the most popular preacher of the century. The judicious reader will not fail to see, however, the mellowing and enriching influence of years of experience, and of those labors, conflicts, and trials which have tested and proved the value of his early convictions and beliefs. Those who were present at the College Conference of 1890 are not likely to forget the thrilling effect of this hymn when sung, to the tune "Nottingham," by five hundred ministers and students. The assembly sat at the commencement; but for the latter verses all rose, the time was quickened, and Mr. Manton Smith's cornet helped to swell the volume of praise expressed by the writer.

CHAPTER XIX.

VARIOUS AGENCIES IN CONNECTION WITH MR. SPURGEON AND HIS CHURCH.

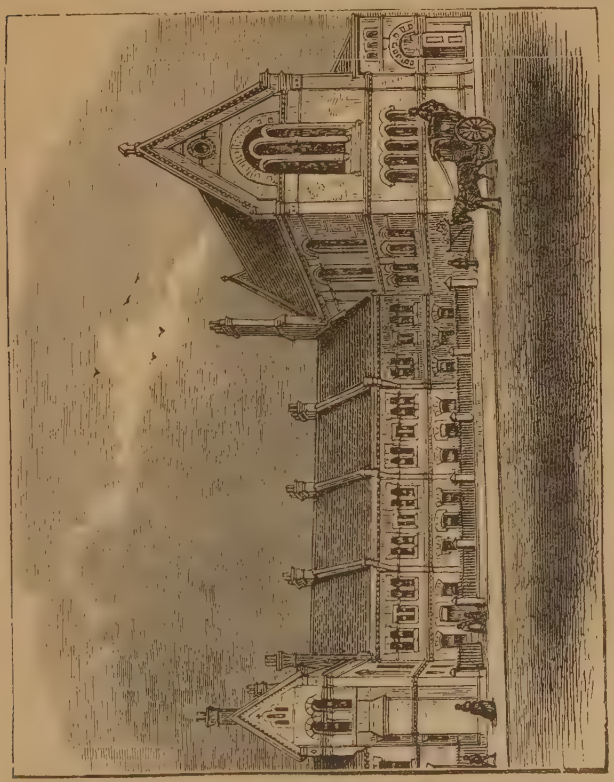
NOT least among the institutions connected with the Tabernacle are the ALMHOUSES, in the Station Road, Walworth, just opposite the Elephant and Castle railway station. The foundation-stone of these buildings was laid 6th May, 1867. Six almshouses had been founded in Dr. Rippon's time; but it was necessary to remove them, and desirable to place them nearer the Tabernacle, so that the aged inmates might have the opportunity of attending their pastor's ministry. The new houses were made more comfortable and convenient, their number increased to seventeen, and the income of the inmates augmented. Over one of the doors is this inscription: —

"THESE BUILDINGS ARE CONNECTED WITH THE ANCIENT CHURCH NOW WORSHIPPING IN THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE. SIX OF THE ALMSHOUSES, TOGETHER WITH A SCHOOLROOM, WERE BUILT AND ENDOWED UNDER THE PASTORATE OF DR. JOHN RIPPON, AT NEW PARK STREET, SOUTHWARK. THE PRESENT STRUCTURES WERE COMPLETED

MARCH, 1868.

C. H. AND J. A. SPURGEON, PASTORS."

The Schoolroom is at present used by the London School Board. The endowments on the Almshouses are considerable, but not yet sufficient to meet the amount paid to the inmates. We have already



METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE ALMSHOUSES.

mentioned that Mr. Spurgeon gave £5,000 to the Almshouses from his silver-wedding testimonial.

The COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION was founded in 1866.

and has worked steadily ever since. The writer has had several of the colporteurs under his supervision; and he can testify that, although all the men are not alike good and adapted to their work, this Christian agency, as a whole, is one of the most useful, the best adapted to country districts, and the cheapest form of evangelical effort that can be employed. The men not only sell large quantities of religious books, but they distribute tracts, visit the sick, conduct Temperance and Band-of-Hope meetings, and preach the gospel in the open-air, and in chapels, cottages, mission-rooms, etc. One of the colporteurs, now at work in Surrey, has told the writer that among his best customers for books are the evangelical clergy of the Church of England, who are usually ready to purchase everything that emanates from Mr. Spurgeon's pen. About ninety colporteurs are now employed by the Association. Its head-quarters are at the Pastors' College. A colporteur can usually be sent to any district for which friends guarantee £40 per annum. The Secretary is always glad to furnish all necessary information as to the method of opening a new district.

The limit of space compels us to give merely a list of the other agencies connected with the Tabernacle. What an amount of Christian work is represented by the following table! In several cases the missions mentioned have all the machinery of a large church in active operation, although the mem-

bers prefer to remain in fellowship with the parent church, rather than form independent organizations.

MISSIONS, SCHOOLS, ETC., CONNECTED WITH THE TABERNACLE.

Name of Mission, &c.	Teachers and Workers.	Scholars.
Almshouses Sunday-school	12	153
Dunn's Institute	—	—
Boddy's Bridge	3	90
Portobello Road, Notting Hill	9	190
Battersea Park Road	—	—
Lavinia Road, King's Cross	12	120
Little George Street, Bermondsey	12	120
Bedfont, near Hounslow	—	—
North Cheam	4	30
Waltham Abbey	—	—
Townsend Street, Old Kent Road	25	250
Centenary Memorial	38	408
Richmond Street, Walworth, Sunday and Ragged schools	76	1080
Haddon Hall, Bermondsey	50	959
Surrey Gardens Memorial Hall	20	300
Stockwell Orphanage	40	440
Landsdowne Place	45	300
Rock Mission, Camberwell	5	60
Jireh Mission, Garden Row, S.E.	—	—
Bermondsey Ragged School	13	250
Boundary Lane, Camberwell	18	275
Ebury Street, S. W.	—	—
Great Hunter Street	15	170
North Street, Kensington	15	170
Snow's Field, Bermondsey	13	160
Palmer's Green	—	—
Wanstead	—	—
Surrey Square, Old Kent Road	22	380
Townley Street, Walworth	9	200
Vinegar Ground, Old Street	11	167
Ormside Street, Old Kent Road	5	80
Scovill Road, Borough	12	255
Metropolitan Tabernacle Sunday-school	103	1450

Ten Bible Classes: — one for men only, one for women only, one for men and women, the remainder for young men and young women.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Christian Brothers' Benefit Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Evangelists' Association and Country Mission (with training class for the workers).
Metropolitan Tabernacle Flower Mission.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Gospel Temperance Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Ladies' Benevolent Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Ladies' Maternal Society.
Metropolitan Tabernacle Loan Tract Society (for the house-to-house distribution of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons in the neighborhood of the Tabernacle).
Spurgeon's Sermons' Tract Society (for the circulation of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons in Country districts).
Metropolitan Tabernacle Poor Ministers' Clothing Society.
City Missionaries, Bible Women, Mothers' Meetings, Orphanage and Colportage Working Societies, and numerous other agencies.

Where no figures are inserted in the table on the previous page, it is to be understood that the Mission has no Sunday-school connected with it.

It will thus be seen that, not only has Mr. Spurgeon himself filled up his life with an amount of work enough, and more than enough, for twenty ordinary men, but he has instilled his own spirit into all about him. The Tabernacle Church, and its numerous and varied agencies — from the College downward — are all well organized and effectively manned. All the wheels are in motion, "for the spirit of life is in the wheels." May God graciously remove very far the day when the sons of the prophets shall have to say to some Elisha, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?"

CHAPTER XX.

"THE DOWN-GRADE CONTROVERSY."

IN a "Life" of Mr. Spurgeon, coming down to the present time, it would not be proper to pass entirely over what is known as "The Down-Grade Controversy." But while we must needs make some reference to it, we have no intention of attempting to write its history, nor of going into the matter at any length. The time has not come for writing its history; and a short chapter at the end of a book (intentionally free from controversy) is far too limited for its full discussion. Each year, however, and almost every month, brings proof that Mr. Spurgeon's testimony on behalf of the faith once for all delivered to the saints was both needful and well-timed. This also may be said, — and we boldly avow it as not only our conviction, but as a matter of fact, — that no change has come over Mr. Spurgeon, either as to his sentiments and the faith he has firmly held, and as boldly taught from the very first, or as to his love to all the faithful in Christ Jesus. The change has taken place in

others, not in him. If any proof were needed that such a change has taken place in others, we might point to the recent amalgamation of the Particular and General Baptists. The name "Particular Baptist," as representing the Calvinistic view of Redemption, has ceased to be acknowledged by the Council and other representatives of the Baptist Union — at least, in their official capacity. So far, at least, as distinctive doctrines are concerned, the principles of the fathers of the denomination and the Particular Baptist founders of the Missionary Society are alike ignored.

The Christian union and fellowship of believers who, though they differ as to doctrine, yet hold the Head, and meet, and pray, and work as one in Christ, while each one holds his own, is quite another matter. Mr. Spurgeon has always set a noble example of this, though, when occasion required, he has not hesitated to boldly avow and honestly declare his own sentiments wherein he differed from his brethren. From the very first, many of the evangelical clergy of the Church of England have given him their cordial sympathy, and in some cases their practical co-operation; and he has delighted in their fellowship, as men of God and brethren beloved. But he has never spared, on fitting occasions, what he believes to be their errors, as witness his sermon on "Baptismal Regeneration."

But the ground of his testimony is not simply nor

chiefly departure from the doctrines of our Puritan forefathers. As must be admitted, there are graver errors poisoning the Church, exhausting her vitality, and dishonoring her Head. The doctrines of the Universal Fatherhood of God, Conditional Immortality, Post-mortem Salvation, and other speculations which go by the name of "Modern Thought" or "Progressive Theology;" as also the denial of the substitutionary nature of Christ's sacrifice, and the need and efficacy of His atoning death as the basis of practical reconciliation to God; and beneath, and at the back of all, the denial of the full inspiration of the Bible as God's own Word of truth, — these are the errors against which his testimony for God has been raised; and, thank God! not in vain. In this testimony for his Master he has had no man to please, no man to fear; and while some who professed to deplore the same evils have either sheltered the erroneous teachers or quietly held their peace, he has nobly borne the brunt of the battle; and we believe he would have done so had he stood alone. But alone he is not. Never, in all his marvellous career, has he had so thoroughly the hearty sympathy of those who love truth above human applause and the fear of the frowns of men, as in this testimony for his Master. Hundreds of thousands of faithful men and women, in almost every land, and in all denominations which hold to the impregnable principles of the "glorious gospel of the blessed God," have expressed their

hearty, and often practical, sympathy with the man who dared to speak out boldly for his Lord.

Never shall we forget the first meeting called by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance for testimony to the fundamental truths of the gospel, and held in Exeter Hall. The reception given by the audience to Mr. Spurgeon when he rose to speak was almost overpowering in its fervor and heartiness. We occupied a seat on the platform near enough to witness the powerful emotions that agitated his soul, and the tears that streamed down his cheeks as he listened to previous speakers; and though only a very few of his Baptist brethren were present, there was not wanting such a display of hearty sympathy as must have been cheering to his heart, and comforting to his soul. Since then time has revealed much; and following months and years will, no doubt, make more and more evident how needful was the protest which fidelity to God and to the gospel would not allow him to withhold.

The Lord graciously purge His Church of all false doctrine, all false teachers, and all who are traitors in the camp of Israel! And may the Spirit from on high be poured out upon all flesh, that all the ends of the earth may see, and own, and rejoice in, the salvation of our God!

HELENSBURGH HOUSE, NIGHTINGALE LANE, CLAPHAM. (See page 276.)

CHAPTER XXI.

MR. SPURGEON AT HOME.

SOON after his settlement in London Mr. Spurgeon had a pleasant home in Helensburgh House, Nightingale Lane, Clapham, of which we have given a view on the previous page. Clapham was then country, and the grounds around Helensburgh House made it a quiet and somewhat secluded residence, where Mr. Spurgeon could, so far as time and his many engagements permitted, take that exercise and recreation which are so needful to every one. Here he spent many happy years.

There was a favorite retreat which he greatly delighted in, formed amid the branches of a large and venerable tree. When the Metropolitan Tabernacle took the place of New Park Street Chapel, the pulpit stairs of the latter sanctuary, which had been removed in the enlargement of the chapel, were utilized as a means of ascent to the kind of Robinson Crusoe retreat, as shown opposite. In course of years, however, they grew rather too crazy for the weight of divinity that had so often passed up and down them.

NEW PARK STREET PULPIT STAIRS.

THE LAWN, HELENSBURGH HOUSE.

On the opposite page is a view of the garden of Mr. Spurgeon's Nightingale Lane residence; but, as the nightingales had forsaken their old haunts in the lane, and London approached almost daily nearer and nearer, Mr. Spurgeon was glad when the way was opened for his removal to Norwood.

He has related to the writer, in walking over the charming grounds at "Westwood," the circumstances

ENTRANCE TO "WESTWOOD."

which led him to his present residence, Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood. They cannot be recorded here; but if they could, the reader would distinctly trace the kind providence of that God whose servant the owner of "Westwood" is.

The entrance to "Westwood" is not imposing, but it is the opening to a wider scene. By means of that

gate tens of thousands of letters, many of them bearing tidings of blessings received from Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, or accompanying donations for the various Tabernacle enterprises, have entered. Let the sight

LAWN AT "WESTWOOD."

of that gate remind the reader to remember in prayer the often weary man of God who finds his home at "Westwood."

Neither the house nor the grounds can be seen from Beulah Hill. The views of the surrounding country from various parts of the grounds are delightful in the extreme. The cosey arbor, of which we give a picture on the preceding page, is not far from what was made by a former proprietor into a bowling-green. It is a gladdening sight to see how the students from the Pastors' College can recreate here, when they are invited down to "Westwood" for a day, while the President and the Professors meet for conference in the arbor.

"Westwood" was built by a gentleman of widely different tastes from those of the present owner. The billiard-room was a spacious apartment, most elaborately ornamented, and well lighted. It has made an admirable study, the decorations and gas-lights being unaltered. In the drawing on the next page Mr. Spurgeon can be seen as he usually appears when at his work in this room. Behind him is an open door, leading into a private study, from which you can pass into the conservatories. This inner sanctum is humorously named "The Den," although it is a widely different place from John Bunyan's "Den." At the study-table, and to the right of Mr. Spurgeon, sits Mr. J. W. Harrald, one of his private secretaries. Through the ample windows, to the right of the picture, you can quickly reach one of the lawns where the writer has taken part in some pleasant gatherings of students and others.

MR. SPURGEON'S STUDY AT "WESTWOOD."

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. SPURGEON'S LONG ILLNESS.

READERS of "The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit" need not to be told, what those less closely acquainted with Mr. Spurgeon and his work may not so well remember, that for many years past he has been subject to periodical attacks of rheumatic gout, which have either laid him prostrate at home, or necessitated a change to a milder climate. The change has not been, so much as it ought to have been, an entire rest. The literary part of his work has been still pursued, while he has been kept in touch with the Tabernacle and all its manifold institutions and agencies. Moreover, he has drawn around him a circle of friends of various denominations and nationalities, to whom he has ministered, even when too weak to leave his hotel. As is well known, Mentone, in the south of France, has been his chosen winter resort, and to this charming little town many Christian people have been attracted by the fact of his visits.

After the College Conference held in April, 1891, when Mr. Spurgeon almost excelled himself in his

marvellously powerful inaugural address "The Greatest Fight in the World," it was found that the exhausting demands of these meetings on mind and body, brain and heart, had left him exceedingly weak and prostrate. He struggled on bravely for some weeks; but an attack of influenza, in the middle of May, completed what overwork had commenced. In about three weeks Mr. Spurgeon had so far recovered that on *Lord's-day morning, June 7th*, though still weak, he preached in the Tabernacle, leaving the following day for the country, for rest and change. Unhappily, he took a chill; his old enemy, rheumatic gout, assailed, him; and on June 24th his symptoms became so alarmingly serious that Dr. Joseph Kidd was called in to consult with Dr. R. M. Miller, of Upper Norwood, who had been in attendance since the 18th of May.

At the beginning of July there seemed to be good ground for believing that the disease — congestion of the kidneys — was being subdued, although the patient's pains were very acute; but on the evening of Saturday, 4th of July, the delirium, which had passed away for some days, returned, and it was evident that a still more serious stage of the illness had been reached. From that time Dr. Miller slept at "Westwood" every night for several weeks, and Dr. Kidd had a consultation with him every morning.

"At intervals," says the writer of "Notes" in "The Sword and the Trowel," "a few bright rays of hope

have shot through the dense darkness which has surrounded the sick chamber; but these have been followed by periods of most painful suspense, in which the precious life has seemed to reach the very verge of the unseen world. All that medical skill, patient watching, and careful nursing could do, appeared, for a while, to be of no avail."

"Meanwhile prayer without ceasing was made to God for him the world over, in ordinary meetings and in special gatherings. As soon as the critical condition of the pastor was made known, the church at the Tabernacle constituted itself into one great protracted prayer-meeting. Not only did thousands gather together for a day of prayer, but for weeks special prayer-meetings have been continued two or three times daily. . . . In addition to the officers and members of the church at the Tabernacle, clergymen and ministers and missionaries of all denominations have been present at the public gatherings for prayer; and many who have been altogether out of sympathy with the pastor in his contention 'for the faith once for all delivered to the saints' have been most earnest in their petitions on his behalf."

The meetings for prayer were continued daily at the Tabernacle until the pastor was well enough to start for Mentone. Also, in many other places the streams of earnest supplication have been continued, showing, in a remarkable manner, the real unity of the One Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Among press notices, the following, from the pen of Dr. Clifford, in "The Review of the Churches," comes all the more gracefully from the fact that, in some important theological matters, Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. Clifford are very far apart: —

"In tender sympathy, the whole Christian Church has gathered around the sufferer at Norwood, and prayer has been made continually to God for him. In hundreds of religious gatherings all through the English-speaking world, and even beyond, his affliction has been the burden of earnest petitions. Little children have asked the news of his health the first thing in the day, and 'the great ones of the earth' have sent him assurances of their watchful sympathy. Men outside all churches have been stirred by the news in the successive bulletins, and hailed with joy any sign of returning vigor. Rarely, if ever, has a warmer regard, or a more widespread interest in an invalid, been elicited than in the distinguished preacher of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. . . . And what a witness is this to the sterling qualities of the man, — to the invincible faith of the people in his sincerity, as well as their admiration for his exceptional gifts as a preacher! He has won the popular heart. His victory over it is complete. He holds it still."

The manifestation of sympathy with the sufferer and his beloved ones has not been confined to prayers and prayer-meetings; besides numerous callers, let-

ters and telegrams have reached "Westwood" from "all sorts and conditions of men," and from all parts of the world. Among the more notable personages who either called, wrote, or telegraphed, the following may be mentioned: —

The Prince of Wales; the Duke of Argyll; the Marquis of Hartington; the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen; Earl Fortescue; the Countess of Seafield; Lord and Lady Denman; Lord and Lady Gilbert Kennedy; Lord Brassey; Lord and Lady Kinnaird; Lord Kilmaine; the Dowager Lady Abercromby; Lady Massy; Lady Peto; Lady Wright; Sir Arthur and Lady Nicolson; Lady Louisa Ashburton; Lady Anne Synge; Sir John Burns; Sir Charles Lawson; Sir Wilfrid and Lady Lawson; Lady King-Hall; Lady Gordon (Edinburgh); Sir A. H. Layard; Sir Frederick Perkins; Sir Henry Peto; Sir John and Lady Simon; the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.; the Right Hon. Hugh Childers, M.P.; Mr. Benjamin Scott, City Chamberlain, and Mrs. Scott; and such representatives of the best men and women in all the churches as Mrs. Pennefather; Messrs. T. A. Denny; W. J. Evelyn; William Fowler; F. W. N. Lloyd; D. McLaren; E. Rawlings; J. Herbert Tritton; George Williams; and Dr. Barnardo. A long list of the clergy, "High," "Low," and "Broad," might be headed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of Exeter, Liverpool, Ripon, Rochester, Sydney (New South Wales) Winchester,

and Worcester; the Dean of Westminster; the Archdeacons of Llandaff and Liverpool; and Canons Bell, Bullock, Fleming, Jenkins, Palmer, Money, Sidebotham, John Smith, Tugwell, and Wilberforce. The Reformed Episcopal and Free Churches of England were represented by Bishops Dicksee, Richardson, and Sugden; while the sympathy of Jews was most kindly expressed by their Chief Rabbi, Dr. Hermann Adler. Nonconformist ministers of all denominations were most hearty in their sympathetic utterances; while cablegrams, telegrams, letters, and resolutions came from almost endless Associations, Assemblies, Colleges, Committees, Conferences, Congresses, Conventions, Institutions, Missions, Societies, Synods, Unions, &c., including almost all the great religious and philanthropic agencies of the Metropolis, the United Kingdom, and many parts of the Continent and the English Colonies throughout the world.

One of the most noteworthy letters was the following from Mr. Gladstone to Mrs. Spurgeon: —

My dear Madam, — In my own home, darkened at the present time, I have read with studied interest daily accounts of Mr. Spurgeon's illness; and I cannot help conveying to you the earnest assurance of my sympathy with you, and with him; and of my cordial admiration, not only of his splendid powers, but still more of his devoted and unfailing character.

May I humbly commend you and him, in all contingencies, to the infinite stores of the Divine love and mercy, and subscribe myself, my dear madam,

Faithfully yours,

W. E. Gladstone.

Mrs. Spurgeon sent the following reply, the postscript being in her husband's handwriting: —

Westwood, Upper Norwood,
18*th July*, 1891.

Dear Mr. Gladstone, — Your words of sympathy have a special significance and tenderness, coming from one who has just passed through the deep waters which seem now to threaten me. I thank you warmly for your expressions of regard for my beloved husband, and with all my heart I pray that the consolations of God may abound towards you, even as they do to me. Although we cannot yet consider the dear patient out of danger, the doctors have to-day issued a somewhat more hopeful bulletin. I feel it is an honor to be allowed to say that I shall ever be

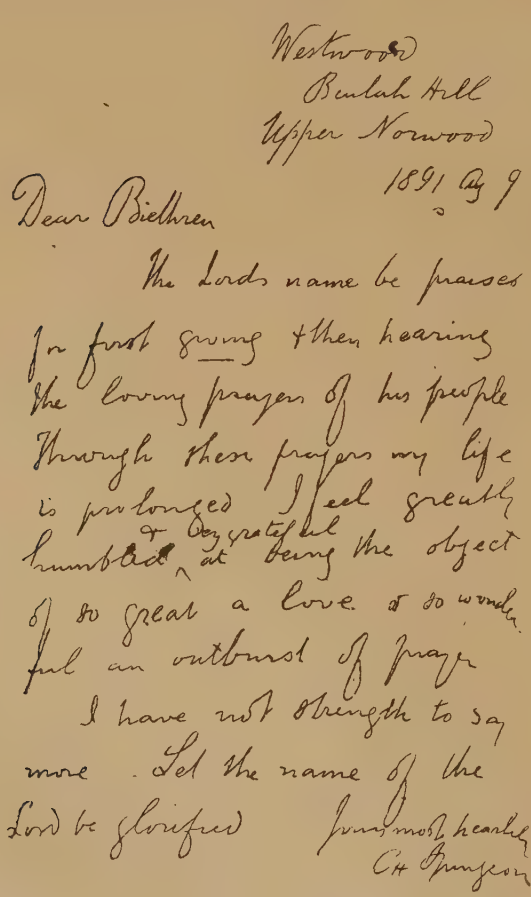
Your grateful friend,

S. Spurgeon.

P. S. — Yours is a word of love such as those only write who have been into the King's country, and have seen much of His face. My heart's love to you.

C. H. Spurgeon.

The letter to the congregation at the Tabernacle, dated 9th of August, of which the following is a reduced *fac-simile*, was the first Mr. Spurgeon was able to write with his own hand: —



Westwood
Beulah Hill
Upper Norwood
1891 Aug 9

Dear Brethren

The Lords name be praised for first giving & then hearing the loving prayers of his people through these prayers my life is prolonged I feel greatly humbled & very grateful at being the object of so great a love & so wonderful an outburst of prayer

I have not strength to say more. Let the name of the Lord be glorified Yours most heartily
C H Spurgeon

The following note, written by Mr. Spurgeon, appeared in "The Sword and the Trowel" for October, 1891. He was then making slow progress, able to take carriage exercise, and looking forward hopefully — though probably after a lengthened sojourn in some sunny clime — to take up again some parts at least of his manifold work: —

"I am unable to send a personal letter of thanks to the thousands of friends, of all ranks and religions, who wrote sympathetic letters to Mrs. Spurgeon and myself during the dark days of my illness; but I beg, in the best manner possible to me, to return my hearty thanks to them all To my dear, sorrowing wife, the kind words from all quarters were, by God's blessing, an unutterable consolation. I was too ill to know much about the matter; but now I am recovering, the reading of these generous expressions fills my eyes with tears, my mind with astonishment, and my heart with gratitude. Surely there is a unity deep down in the Church of God, and on fit occasions it shows itself: that I should furnish such an occasion, overwhelms me. Some of those affectionate expressions, from persons who are ecclesiastically divided from me, are as fervent as if we agreed on every point, and are vastly more true and precious than if that were the case. Brethren and sisters in Christ, the Lord recompense upon each of you a hundred-fold your tender consideration of

one who had no claim upon you but his great affliction!

"To those who are not of the Christian faith, I cannot but feel a singular tenderness when I read, not only their respectful inquiries, but their generous sentiments towards me. It is astonishing to me that I should have so warm a place in their esteem; and I trust I may do nothing which will prove me unworthy of it.

"I have also the happy task of thanking the countless friends who did not write *to me*, but lifted up their hearts in prayer on my behalf. I have been saved from death by prayer. In very many instances there has been an assured faith with the prayer; and this has been the certain token of prevalence with God. To hear that friends unknown to me spent whole nights in supplication for me, and that multitudes of churches presented special intercession, made me very happy, and caused me to say at the very worst, 'I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.'

"That every one of those who thougnt of me so lovingly may thus be remembered by the Great Father in any future hour of sorrow, is my fervent prayer. "C. H. SPURGEON."

Since this note changes have taken place, but the beloved patient is not yet well. He is in the Lord's hands; and there, with confidence and sub-

mission, we must be content to leave him, with the prayer that God will fulfil our highest hopes, and disappoint all our fears and apprehensions.

In one of the issues of "The New York Observer," during September, 1891, is an article by the English correspondent of that excellent paper, on "Mr. Spurgeon's Long Illness." The writer mentions the prayer of some one he knew, meaning himself, that God would add to Mr. Spurgeon's life "fifteen years," as he did in the case of Hezekiah, citing the cases of Mr. Keach's recovery, and the restoration of Mr. Charles, of Bala, in answer to earnest prayers.

The following verses, which appeared in "The Sword and the Trowel," show that others offered a similar prayer. The Lord graciously answer in this case, as in those above-mentioned!

A PRAYER FOR MR. SPURGEON.

Put back the dial, Lord,
As in the olden day![1]
Thy saving strength afford:—
For this we humbly pray.

The warrior who, in might,
Did Thine own weapon wield,
Has fallen in the fight,
Lies stricken on the field.

The voice that sounded clear
Above the jangling crowd,
That brought "glad tidings" near,
And published it aloud;

[1] 2 Kings xx. 11.

Those trumpet tones are faint,
That rang from shore to shore:
O God! Thy suffering saint
Give back to us once more!

Such evils to be met,
Such battles to be won,
Such wickedness — and yet
The conflict scarce begun.

'T is THINE to give the word,
And we can only pray —
"Put back the dial, Lord,
As in the olden day!"

ARTHUR MEE, F. R. A. S.

Llanelly, Carmarthenshire.

It may be well to add a few words in closing this chapter. They must be brief, but they should not be wanting in expressions of heartfelt thankfulness for all the past, and for all the hopeful signs of probable restoration. We wish we could say *certain* signs; but all the future is with Him who holds all issues in His mighty hand, — a hand guided by infallible wisdom, and moved by a heart of unbounded and everlasting love.

For all the grace given to the countless thousands of suppliants, and for all the answers to their prayers already bestowed, let the name of the Lord be praised. We may well sing again the chorus so often sung in past years at the stirring of the baptismal pool, —

"Praise ye the Lord! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!"

or that older doxology which was sung at the railway station as the train that bore the distinguished patient towards the land of summer and flowers was starting, and which was taken up by friends and the railway officials of different degrees, —

> "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
> Praise Him all creatures here below,
> Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
> Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;"

or repeat the joyful strains of the youthful Milton, —

> "Let us, with a gladsome mind,
> Praise the Lord, for he is kind:
> For His mercies shall endure,
> Ever faithful, ever sure."

As to the future, we must still wait, and pray, and hope; and hope, and pray, and wait. The deeply interesting article by Mr. Spurgeon in "The Sword and the Trowel" for December, informs us as to the *caution* which the doctors have strictly enjoined upon him. Two months at Mentone have manifested some progress towards recovery, although the time of the year is that when all the springs of life are down. Mr. Spurgeon has been for many years an overworked man, and he is now no longer young. The spring may do much for him, by God's blessing, and we trust it will. But his great weakness of body warns us not to expect him to be well enough to return to his pulpit for several months; and for a long time to come his church must probably be content with

one service on the Lord's-day. Mr. Spurgeon has such faith in the prayers of believers all over the world being answered, that he is quite sanguine as to his complete restoration. Let us still pray that God will give him back to us, — to the Church and to the world; and that the remembrance of all his sufferings may give added emphasis in the hearts of the myriads of his readers to those wonderful utterances of gospel truth which seem more and more pregnant with spiritual power as they are read and re-read again and again. The last sermon but one that Mr. Spurgeon preached before he was taken ill was a very remarkable discourse upon the text, "My times are in Thy hand." This was true at that time, it has been true ever since, and it is true still. He is in the hands of our Father and his, the God who only doeth wondrous things, who makes no mistakes, and —

> "Whose love is as large as His power,
> And neither knows measure nor end."

Here we rest, for —

> "All our times are in His hand,
> All events at His command."

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. SPURGEON AT MENTONE.

WHEN he was much younger Mr. Spurgeon visited various parts of the Continent of Europe, though no inducement — and he has had many very strong ones — has won him over to cross the Atlantic. But for many years, needing rest as well as change, and especially, on account of his rheumatic affection, a milder climate than that of England in winter, he has spent his vacation at Mentone, in the South of France. Hôtel Beau Rivage, of which we give a view on the next page, has been his place of sojourn for several years. Mr. Spurgeon describes it as a quiet, homely place, and speaks in high terms of the host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Bernhard. The apartments occupied by Mr. Spurgeon are on the first floor to the right, the windows of which are hidden by the palms in front. Dr. Sewell, a Canadian physician, residing at the hotel, took the view which we have reproduced; and, at his request, Mr. Spurgeon, and Mr. Passmore, the pastor's friend, deacon, and publisher, occupied positions in the

HOTEL BEAU RIVAGE, MENTONE.

balcony to the left of the picture, in the floor above, when the photograph was taken.

It is not rest and change only that Mr. Spurgeon finds in the sunny South; it is his privilege to meet there many others like-minded, with whom he enjoys holy fellowship in the things of God. On one of his annual visits he met at Mentone the venerable George Müller, of Bristol, Mr. J. Hudson Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission, and the late Pastor John Bost, the president of the asylums for imbeciles, epileptics, etc., at La Force. Mr. Spurgeon wrote an interesting description of this "Interview with Three of the King's Captains," and published it in "The Sword and the Trowel." His magazine has frequently been enriched and enlivened with articles about Mentone and its surroundings. Not being able to walk much, he has, in his carriage-drives, explored the whole region; and he has written his impressions of the "Drives at Mentone" in a style which could never be found in a mere guide-book. From one of these, "The Boulevard Victoria," we take the following extracts, as specimens: —

"We drive from Hôtel Beau Rivage in the direction of Italy, and are scarcely started before our eyes rest upon an inscription upon the wall of a villa, which, being turned into English, reads as follows: 'The sun, the soft and salubrious climate, and the water of the sea combined, constitute the chief remedies created by the good God: thanks to the glory of

the supreme Benefactor, who has deigned thus to favor us!' To this is added, 'First villa built at Menton for accommodating strangers, by J. Franciosy, 1855.'

"Very good, M. Franciosy! How greatly has your little town increased and improved since you took in your first guest! Truly, it is a real sanatorium for the sick, and a place of delight to those who have health enough to enjoy it. You did well to ascribe praise unto God.

"The Custom-house, next to the Grand Hôtel, used to be a very busy spot, — a place of torment to poor importers crossing the border, and often a place of delay to travellers because the way was blocked by carts, and cattle, and carriages, and all sorts of contrivances, undergoing search by the custom-house officers. There is very little doing here now. France vexes Italy, and Italy envies France, after the same fashion as Ephraim and Judah did of old. Hence an ugly tariff, which is injurious to both nations, and stops the trade which would have been beneficial to thousands. Still, if a cart should come by, you will be amused by the way in which the officers thrust their long rapiers into the bales of goods, or trusses of hay. What unpacking, lugging down of baskets, weighing, chattering, paper-signing, and waiting! This once done, the collectors of the customs of the republic return to a never-ending, but healthful, game of bowls.

"We ascend between high walls, and with a sharp turn to the left we come upon the new road. This road runs around the back of the gigantic arm-chair which forms the East Bay. To this bay the words of the late Dr. Robertson, of Irvine, are peculiarly appropriate: it is 'walled all round on three sides — west, north, and east — by a double range of mountains, through which no valley cuts a passage for the wind, thus effectually screening it, in God's good providence, from all western mistrals, northern glacials, and eastern Euroclydons.' Many persons think this bay too warm, — 'relaxing,' they call it. But we come out on purpose to be warm; and if we looked for a bracing air, we certainly should not travel to the south of France. . . .

"How often, on a Sabbath afternoon, have I rested here, and many a page have I written in the olive-gardens, both above and below this walk! With a waterproof rug spread on the ground, on a choice corner of a terrace, where we could see the harbor, I have listened to a reader, and then have turned my friend into a shorthand writer, and dictated to him as quickly as I could speak. By this process came forth to the world the little book entitled, 'The Clue of the Maze.' I mention this only to encourage other invalids to use this spot for the purpose of quiet repose. I know not whether the proprietors of the olive-gardens are as tolerant towards visitors as they formerly were; they never questioned me.

"Here we are right over *the Old Town.* What little furrows or burrows the streets appear! The people must be able to shake hands out of the windows from both sides. What a terror they must have been in when that church-steeple rocked to and fro in the earthquake! Nobody could tell on whose house the lofty tower would fall, and assuredly, had it come down, the fragments would have crashed through those tile roofs like a shower of shells from some tremendous fortification. The houses from this point look old and dowdy, and strike the observer as a strange conglomeration of abodes; but they shelter a quiet and respectable people, who far excel in their morals the masses who are herded together in London slums, and have not the responsibilities of those in the cities of England by whom the gospel is so persistently refused."

While we write, Mr. Spurgeon is again at Mentone; and for the first time for a quarter of a century his beloved wife has been well enough to accompany him. She has often heard of the beauties of Mentone, and at last she is able to enjoy them in company with her dear husband; and thus the enjoyment of both of them has been greatly increased. May he return to his work, and to his church and people, with restored health, in the possession of his old vigor, to achieve yet greater things for the Lord of hosts, the covenant God of the spiritual Israel!

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

WE commenced this "Life" of Mr. Spurgeon by remarking that he was signally called and fitted to do a great work for God, unparalleled in his day, as in all previous ages of Christianity. That he has been specially used by God to an extent to which no living man besides has been used is a fact that very few will question; but the extent to which he has been used will never be fully known, until the veil of eternity shall be lifted, and the secrets of all hearts be made known. It is abundantly evident that he is a God-made man, and in a very special sense a God-sent man. As the Lord sent Gideon, so has He sent Mr. Spurgeon. Both as young men, were full of self-depreciation, but both were clothed with divine power, and both performed faithfully the work committed to them by the Lord. Both, too, gave God all the glory of their achievements. But the great preacher of the Metropolitan Tabernacle has exceeded the son of the Abi-ezrite, alike as to the quality of his work, the wide extent of his influence, and the duration of the power he has wielded. The words

addressed to the young Hebrew, by which he was clothed as with a divine panoply, apply with a thousand-fold emphasis to the preacher who, when little more than a boy, began his wonderful career: "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. . . . And the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might . . . have not I sent thee?" (Judges vi. 12, 14.) By no other means could Mr. Spurgeon have accomplished what he has done; and no man on earth would exceed him in the depth, and fervor, and profound sincerity and thankfulness of the ascription: "*To God be all the glory!*"

. . . . . .

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." [1]

. . . . . .

[1] This beautiful ascription to the Triune God, known as "The Lesser Doxology," and of which nearly all modern doxologies are imitations, has come down to us from a period soon after the time of the apostles. It is a useful and potent testimony to the distinct personality and unity of the Three-One Jehovah, and was especially useful when these truths were so fiercely assailed by Arius and others, in the times of the early Fathers.

CHAPTER XXV.

MR. SPURGEON'S TRANSLATION.

"Mr. Spurgeon fell asleep in Jesus
at 11.5 P.M."

So ran the notice posted at the end of the bulletins on the door of the Hôtel Beau Rivage, Mentone, 1st February, 1892.

"He was not; for God took him." — Gen. v. 24.

"Then I have conquered; then at last
My course is run, good-night!
I am well pleased that it is past;
A thousand times good-night!

Dr. G. W. Sacer: *Wolfenbüttel*, 1635–1699.

Yes, the end has come. The faithful warrior is crowned. There is sadness on earth, for "a prince and a great man in Israel has fallen;" but there is also joy; and joy there should be, for all his weariness and sufferings are past. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In such words the redeemed spirit would speak to us, if only we could hear; and yet, hear we can and do. In the stillness of that contem-

plation, in which we follow him to the world of light and joy whither he is gone, may we not hear him say to us: —

"The weakness once I sank beneath,
I never more shall know.
Lay on my coffin many a palm,
Victors empalmed are seen;
And lo! my soul attains through death
The crown of evergreen,
That blooms in fadeless groves of heaven;
And this great victor's crown,
That mighty Son of God hath given,
Who for my sake came down.
'T was but a while that I was sent
To dwell among you here;
Now God resumes what He hath lent,
Oh, grieve not o'er my bier;
But say, 't was given at His command
Who takes it; He is just;
Our life and death are in His hand,
Whom all His servants trust."

We should, therefore, rejoice for all that he was enabled to do for God while here — and what pen but an angel's can ever record it? — and for all that to which he has attained through sovereign grace, — that grace he so faithfully declared, that grace in which his very soul delighted, and which he lived to extol. How he delighted to dwell upon the theme in his ministry, the world knows; and how he used to repeat and sing his favorite hymn —

"Grace, 't is a charming sound" —

to his favorite tune (Cranbrook), and in the exultant strains of John Kent, to declare, —

"We 'll sing the same while life shall last,
And when, at th' archangel's blast,
Our sleeping dust shall rise,
Then, in a song forever new,
The glorious theme we 'll still pursue
Throughout the azure skies."

Our Own Hymn Book.

But the believer has not to wait for the resurrection to take up in sweeter strains the songs of earth. "The song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" is hymned by all "the spirits of the just made perfect" as they pass from the holy to the holiest, and take their place before the throne as the "redeemed from among men."

Is there any shadow of disappointment anywhere that there was no utterance in his last moments attesting with his dying voice the witness of his whole life? There could not be, from the nature of the disease which was God's messenger to call him hence; and there needed not to be. God, liberal as He is with His gifts, does not bestow them uselessly. Such a ministry, and such a life, in all respects its counterpart and its commendation, was a testimony which, if men will not believe it and regard it and lay it to heart, neither will they be persuaded by any words from the death-chamber, nor even could he arise from the dead.

And yet some words from the short address given by Mr. Spurgeon at Mentone, on the last evening of 1891, may be taken as his dying testimony: —

"'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' On that blessed fact I rest my soul. Though I have preached Christ crucified for more than forty years, and have led many to my Master's feet, I have at this moment no ray of hope but that which comes from what my Lord Jesus has done for guilty men."

> "Behold Him there! the bleeding Lamb!
> My perfect, spotless Righteousness,
> The great unchangeable, 'I AM,'
> The King of glory and of grace."
>
> *Sword and Trowel*, February, 1892.

Well, therefore, was the following text of Holy Scripture inscribed on his coffin, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. iv. 7). He did not apply the words to himself; but he might truly have done so.

Before this concluding chapter, in a book delayed in publication by his long illness, reaches the public eye, the memorial and funeral services will have come to an end, and the first pang of sorrow for the loss which all his myriad friends have sustained will have been somewhat assuaged; and as we write, we pray that the God of all consolation may comfort their hearts with the contemplation of "the joy of the Lord" into which he has entered, and with the happy expectation and joyous hope of a blessed reunion, where there will be a knitting up of all severed friendships, and a perfect accord of all

the servants of God, where "the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

To the bereaved widow, beloved by all who know her, and by multitudes besides, heartfelt sympathy goes forth, and will go forth, that, weakened as she is by long and painful bodily affliction, bowed with grief at her loss, and called, as she will be, to exercise important functions in connection with her husband's publications and papers, she may prove the truth of the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." And with one voice, the one Church throughout the world will pray, not for her alone, but for the deacons, elders, and members of the Tabernacle Church, that needed wisdom and grace may be given, that in the future, as in the past, the testimony of the Lord may be according to "the simplicity that is in Christ," and that the "candle of the Lord" may continue to burn with undiminished brightness and unfading lustre.

The night of 31st January, 1892, will be "a night to be much remembered," as that in which the greatest preacher of his age passed to his rest and reward. May it prove an eventful night to many who have hitherto slighted, neglected, or refused the "great salvation" he proclaimed! May the earnest pleadings of him whose mortal lips are now silent in the grave come back to them with a thousandfold energy and emphasis, and with the power of the Holy Spirit; that, as Samson slew more

at his death than in his life, so now the blessing resting on the testimony of the lips sealed in silence may be manifold more abundant than on the living utterances of the great soul-winner!

One closing word to all who bear the Christian name, as coming from the silent grave of the dear and beloved departed one, whose heart embraced all believers, and thrilled with love for all mankind:

Wake, awake, for night is flying,
The watchmen on the heights are crying
Awake, Jerusalem, at last!
Midnight hears the welcome voices,
And at the thrilling cry rejoices.
Come forth, ye virgins, night is past!
The bridegroom comes, awake,
Your lamps in gladness take;
Hallelujah!
And for his marriage feast prepare,
For ye must go to meet Him there!"

DR. PHILIP NICOLAI, 1556–1601.

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